Art as Resistance

Placats · Paintings · Actions · Texts from the Initiative Kunst und Kampf (Art and Struggle)



Art as Resistance



Paintings · Placats · Actions · Texts from the Initiative Kunst und Kampf (Art and Struggle)

Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

Langer, Bernd:

Art as resistance: placats, paintings, actions, texts from the Initiative Kunst und Kampf (art and struggle); Kunst und Kampf / Bernd Langer. [Transl. by: Anti-Fascist Forum]. - 1. Engl. ed. - Göttingen: Aktiv-Dr. und Verl., 1998

Einheitssacht.: Kunst als Widerstand <engl.> ISBN 3-932210-03-4

Copyright © 1998 by Bernd Langer | Kunst und Kampf AktivDruck & Verlag Lenglerner Straße 2 37079 Göttingen Phone ++49-(5 51) 6 70 65 Fax ++49-(5 51) 63 27 65

All rights reserved

Cover and Design, Composing, Scans: Martin Groß Internet: http://www.puk.de interactive web-community for politics and culture e-Mail: info@puk.de

Translated by:
Anti-Fascist Forum
P.O. Box 6326, Stn. A
Toronto, Ontario
M5W 1P7 Canada
Internet: http://burn.ucsd.edu/~aff/
e-Mail: aff@burn.ucsd.edu

first English edition, November 1998

Langer, Bernd:
Art as Resistance
Paintings · Placats · Actions · Texts
from the Initiative Kunst und Kampf
Internet: http://www.puk.de/kuk/
e-Mail: kuk@puk.de

Bernd Langer

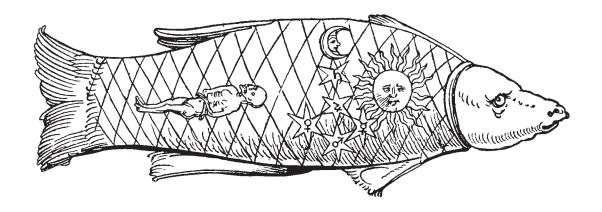
Art as Resistance

Paintings · Placats · Actions · Texts from the Initiative Kunst und Kampf (Art and Struggle)

		5	Foreword
Part 1	Chapter I	7–12	Red Flags in the Cold War
	Chapter II	13–16	Economic Wonder and revolts
	Chapter III	17–20	The New Left
	Chapter IV	21–28	Armed groups
	Chapter V	29–44	A fighting movement
	Chapter VI	45–60	Autonomist Anti-Fascism
Part 2	Chapter VII	61–66	Art and struggle
	Chapter VIII	67–68	The search for discovery
	Chapter IX	69–70	The KuK symbols
	Chapter X	71–72	The criminalization of KuK
	Chapter XI	73–74	Surveillance while painting
	Chapter XII	75–76	The exhibitions of KuK
Part 3	Chapter XIV	77–115	Descriptions of KuK posters
	Chapter XV	116–117	Overview of KuK posters

Chapters: Complete works, Table of Abbreviations and Recommended Literature see the German edition.

According to the German press law, there has to be one person taking legal responsibility for the publication. In order to avoid repression, former revolutionaries are often used as the responsible signatories. The person claiming responsibility is called V.i.S.d.P. – Some of die V.i.S.d.P.'s are explained.



Preliminary remark

The English translation of the book "Kunst als Widerstand" was worked on since October 1997, when the German edition was published. Passages as well as lay-out are revised and updated. No abridgements were done, but some newspaper articles and declarations of attacks were left out. "Art as Resistance" can be read independently of the German edition. Remarks and references to the German edition can be either ignored or understood as additional information.

Foreword

A little more than ten years ago, the Initiative Art and Struggle (KuK - 'Kunst und Kampf') was founded under the motto: "Long live anti-fascist, antagonistic culture!" KuK represented a new political-artistic concept and saw itself as part of the autonomist movement. KuK turned its ideas into reality primarily through the use of poster art. The resistance movement was shown in a very forward way, thereby creating a new, generally understandable aesthetic form. The very clear political statements which were made, resulted in continual criminalization. Only the semi-clandestine structure of KuK, and other preventive measures, made it possible that no people were ever convicted of anything, despite the long list of criminalized posters which were created.

The political and artistic efforts of KuK remain unique within the autonomist scene in Germany. There is no other initiative like it. Over time, a variety of artists participated in KuK. Two travelling exhibitions were organized, displaying posters from the resistance and discussing leftist cultural theory and the criminalization of political art in Germany. During planning sessions for the first travelling exhibition, the idea to produce a catalog was raised. Although this project wasn't realized, a few brochures were produced over the years. After the wave of repression against Autonome Antifa (M) and KuK was withstood in 1996, the KuK book project was started up once again.

The author of this book was born in 1960 and has been active in the autonomist movement since 1977. Most of the events described in this book are based on personal experiences.

One problem which arose while creating the book was how to present the political context within which KuK was operating. A description of the autonomist movement in Germany in the 1980s would be largely incomprehensible without some connection to previous developments of the political resistance. That led to the decision to include sections in the book on the history of the resistance movement from 1945 until the present. That helps to create a new look at history, one which clarifies the background of the autonomist movement.

There are big problems with statistical information, for example just how many members there were in various communist organizations. All the literature available either doesn't name any figures or makes use of statistical information from the state's intelligence agency (the 'Verfassungsschutz'). That's why the numbers in this book, unless stated otherwise, are based on the state's intelligence reports for those years. As for the size of demonstrations, newspaper articles or information from the organizers are used as sources. Useful literature on the autonomist movement is hard to come by, especially with regards to autonomist anti-fascism. In this book, only sources from the movement itself are cited. These texts are often in the form of discussion papers, flyers, or parts of brochures, usually published anonymously. That's why this book does not have a complete Recommended Literature section. The sources of citations are given in the text itself.

This book is a result of praxis and is designed to aid in praxis. That helps to explain its form, and why the ideas and terminology of the autonomist scene are used. Two such terms should be explained beforehand: The term "Three Continents" ('Trikont') came about in the 1980s to describe the underdeveloped nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Also, the term "resistance" rather than "the left" is used in this book. The term "the left" represents a spectrum which extends from social democrats all the way to autonomists. The word "resistance", however, is a term of struggle which only encompasses the militant movement.

This book is the sum of more than ten years of conflict with the criminalization of political art from the resistance in Germany and the fight against repression. It is a document and a call to action – not a swan's song.

Bernd Langer Göttingen, November 1998

Chapter I

Red flags in the Cold War



World politics from 1945 to 1990 was forty-five years in the shadows of the confrontation between the capitalist states of the West, led by the USA, and the so called real existing socialist states, under the leadership of the Soviet Union. In the ashes which the World War II had left behind, this "East-West Conflict" determined political developments and led to the Cold War starting at the end of the 1940s.

Neither the Soviet Union nor the Western powers had any interest in an economically strengthened, sovereign Germany following 1945. But neither side was willing to see its sphere of influence lessened at the beginning of the Cold War. So the Demarcation Line between the East Sector and West Sector became a state's border.

With the USA pulling the strings behind the scenes, the foundation of a West German state was worked out. The first decisive step was the currency reform enacted in the Western occupied areas on July 20, 1948. At the same time, an American economic reconstruction plan known as the "Marshall Plan" began in the West. The political turning point came on August 14, 1949 when elections were held for the first West German parliament, the 'Bundestag'. The East was forced to follow suit. On October 7, 1949, the German Democratic Republic (DDR) was proclaimed.

The first federal government, a right-wing conservative coalition under Konrad Adenauer (CDU), was granted certain rights, but a fully independent state, the Federal Republic of Germany, didn't quite exist at that time. The achievement of state sovereignty came with rearmament and the creation of a West German army. Of course, these quick changes came about as part of American foreign policy. At the end of the 1940s, the USA was pursuing the policy of "roll back" against the Soviet Union. In Europe, the creation of a West German army as part of NATO played a central role in this. By 1949, secret talks were already underway to begin arming Germany once again, and these became public with the outbreak of the Korean War.

The Korean War

In 1945, the Allied powers decided on the 38th parallel as the dividing line in Korea between the Soviet and American zones. In June 1950, fighting broke out, during which troops of communist North Korea brought a large part of Korea under their control within a short period of time. A fighting force with a UN mandate, but under U.S. control, intervened on behalf of South Korea. The material superiority of the UN forces was eventually matched with Soviet arms shipments and the

Massacre in Korea, Pablo Picasso, January 1951. The painting shows the war crimes of U.S. troops in Korea, Picasso was a member of the Communist Party. Despite several disagreements with the party's doctrines, he was awarded the Order of Lenin medal for the second time on May 1, 1962.



The peace dove, which became the symbol of the peace movement in the 1950s, was based on a design by Pablo Picasso. This picture shows him at a youth conference in Nice, being received by Free German Youth (FDJ) delegation from Saarland.



deployment of thousands of Chinese volunteers. The fighting continued and resulted in heavy losses, and in December 1950, the war was back where it had started, the 38th parallel, which became the Demarcation Line in 1953 when a ceasefire was reached.

In West Germany, propagandists favoring rearmament tried to draw parallels between Germany and the situation in Korea. Ceaseless polemics argued for West Germany to rearm itself, claiming that the East German police 'Volkspolizei' would attack West Germany at any moment.

Resistance To The Restoration

The first discussions of creating a new army revealed deep splits among the population. The first extra-parliamentary protest movement in West Germany, the 'Ohne-Uns-Bewegung' (Without Us Movement), soon formed.

> The Adenauer government tried to characterize the Ohne-Uns movement as an action against the

> > West directed from Moscow. An initiative calling for a referendum on the rearmament question was quickly banned. Although members of the KPD (communist party) and the FDJ (communist youth organization) were active in the Ohne-Uns movement, it was by no means communist-dominated. Social demo

unionists soon took over the protests and channeled popular discontent with the remilitarization into forms which would not threaten the system.

The highlight of the movement was a bloody police attack on May 11, 1952 in the city of Essen where a youth peace caravan was being organized. Despite being banned, thousands of youths headed to the protest. Police tried to prevent the gathering. As more and more people assembled, police brutally attacked with dogs and clubs. Then there were shots. A young railworker from Munich, Phillip Muller, a member of the FDJ, was killed. Two other youths, a social democrat and a non-party trade unionist, were seriously wounded. No policemen ever faced charges for firing the shots. On the other hand, 11 demonstrators were jailed for a total of 6 years and 4 months for disorderly conduct and "crimes of treason against the Constitution".

In 1957, when the federal government began calling for the 'Bundeswehr', the German army, to possess atomic weapons, a new storm of protest erupted. "Fight Atomic Death!" was the slogan behind which the largest extra-parliamentary protest movement in West Germany up to that time was formed within a period of a few months. Once again, the social democrats (SPD) and the trade unions took over the movement. Both organizations condemned the wildcat strikes which broke out in opposition to atomic armament. Calls for a general strike were rejected by the social democratic movement leadership.

The SPD provided prominent speakers at events and rallies and represented the movement in parliament. After Germany's Constitutional Court banned the call for a referendum on the issue in July 1958, the SPD and the trade unions halted their protests. So the anti-atomic movement lost the forces which it had focused on. Placed on the political defensive and robbed of certain organizational possibilities, the movement collapsed. But after this, the Easter Marches began in 1960.

Domestic Security

The formation of the Federal Republic of Germany, in particular the phase of rearmament, was characterized domestically by aggressive anti-communism and the expansion of the police apparatus. In September 1950, the federal government launched a wave of repression against communists. Members of the KPD and other leftist organizations were officially banned from working in the public sector. The FDJ was hit especially hard. By means of various judicial and police tactics, the group was treated as an illegal organization in all

Caricature from the 'Ohne Uns' movement against remilitarization in West Germany.

8



Art as Resistance

crats and

areas of West Germany after June 1951. The group's ability to function was hampered, and its members faced legal persecution. Officially, the FDJ was declared illegal by the Constitutional Court in July 1954. By then, FDJ leaders were already in prison and the group's organizational structure had been dissolved.

In November 1950, West Germany's Interior Minister filed with the Constitutional Court to have the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) outlawed. This legal maneuvre led to the isolation and public discrediting of the party. At the same time, the legal definitions of crimes of treason were expanded, which led to increased police repression against the KPD. This was followed by raids and public smear campaigns, as well as a whole series of trials against KPD members. Only a few of the several thousands cases against party members ended in convictions. But the campaign of state repression had achieved its aim, namely creating uncertainty and negative feelings about the party among the general public.

The flip side of this political development was the rehabilitation of Nazi war criminals and the reintegration of former Nazis into the government apparatus and bureaucracy. After 1949, Allied laws governing West Germany, which had expressly banned militarist organizations, were suspended. Within a short period of time, a number of veterans' groups and similar organizations were founded. Such measures led to a political climate in Germany similar to that in the USA, where the McCarthy Era came to characterize a time when all progressive elements in government and society were repressed under the guise of anti-communism. With the ratification of the Paris Accords in May 1955, West Germany became a member of the NATO. The formation of the German army, the 'Bundeswehr', that same year completed the integration. But the Western powers still retained some privileges, such as the right to decide over the deployment of forces, the right to decide on pan-Germanic issues, and the right to assume the state's monopoly on force in the event of an emergency.

The End Of The KPD

The collapse of the KPD was of fundamental importance for the further development of the West German left. In Berlin, which was under Soviet control, the KPD had formed a Central Committee in June 1945 and built up the party all across Germany by the end of 1946. The personnel and ideology of the KPD was linked to the party's structures of the time before 1933. The party agitated as part of the world communist movement under the leadership of the CPSU. Soviet communications are supported to the second communication of the commun

nists had a monopoly on ideology and strategy. The interests of the Soviet Union were central to the party's politics. Loyalty to the Soviet Union meant loyalty to the ideals of communism itself. This orientation towards the world political process took precedence over the need to be the vanguard of the class struggle at home.

Such an outlook led to a consciousness in the party which prevented criticism and which viewed political defeats as necessary sacrifices in the still victorious struggle for communism around the world. This would have fatal consequences for the politics of the KPD.

Already in 1946, in the Soviet occupied zone, large property owners had their lands con-

fiscated and handed over to small farmers. This land reform was a measure against rising food shortages, because the lack of necessary machinery made it impossible for large tracts of land to be properly cultivated. It was also a means of destroying feudal structures and punishing war criminals.

The KPD demanded similar land reforms in the Western zones, as well as the socialization of key industries. In doing so, the party was representing the wishes of a large segment of the population. Even the SPD and the CDU (christian democrats) were calling for socialization at that time. The biggest opponents to such a call were the Americans.

In addition to land reform, the KPD was also calling for a unification with the SPD party. Such a call was also timely. In many areas, the KPD and the SPD had joint committees. There was a discussion underway about forming a joint political party. This had its roots in the developments of 1933, when the workers' movement was split in two, thereby making it unable to prevent the Nazi dictatorship from taking over. But many people were opposed to this fusion, especially within the SPD. In the Soviet zones, the union of the two parties moved ahead quickly, and on April 22, 1946 the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) was formed. Many viewed the SED as the result of a forced union of the SPD with the KPD, following the dictates of the Soviet Union. The Allies in the Western zones soon banned the SED. This had a

The May Day badge of the SED in 1946, which was distributed in all of Germany. With the old symbol of the workers' movement, two clenched hands, the SED (in the Soviet sector) and the KPD (in the Western occupied zones) propagated the unification of the SPD and the Communist Party.

The "National Front" was not limited to an initiative by the KPD in West Germany. It was envisioned as a movement for all of Germany. In East Germany, an organization with the same name was established and existed until 1989. The portrait on the flag on this pin shows Phillip Müller.

negative effect on the KPD, because it meant that many potential alliance partners, members and sympathizers of the SPD, felt the need to steer clear of the communists.

Another important development in post-war Germany was the blockade of Berlin by the Soviet military in 1948. Tensions between the Soviets in the East and the Allied powers in the West escalated in June 1948 when all land and sea routes into the Western sectors of Berlin were cut off by the Red Army. The blockade, which lasted until May 1949, was designed to highlight the USSR's desire to decide the political future of all of Berlin. Attempts by Allied aid convoys to break the blokkade would have led to a military confrontation. So the only means of getting supplies to the two million people who lived in the ruins of the city was by air. The Western Allies, by means of a technical and organization act of violence, achieved the impossible: an air bridge to Berlin. The Berlin

blockade and the air bridge were of fundamental importance to the formation of political opinion in West Germany. The longer it



Phillip Müller, April 5, 1931 – May 11, 1952.

The "National Front"

The politics of the CPSU were based upon the global confrontation between the power blocs of the Soviet Union and the USA. The Soviet plan for the strategy of the KPD brought the party into a very difficult situation. An important element of the KPD's politics became the prevention, or delay, of the Western integration of the Federal Republic of Germany. As a counter argument, they proposed German reunification, with the economic and social structures of Germany being modelled on those in the DDR.

With this goal in mind, the CPSU stated that the KPD should place priority on the "national question". That's why, although conditions by no means favored it, the KPD began to initiate an extra-parliamentary "National Front" after 1949. In KPD terminology, the notion of a "colonial regime" was discussed, namely that West Germany

was being ruled by foreign capitalists and a small class of national traitors. But despite their attempts, the KPD could not politicize the masses by means of the "national question". The KPD lost more and more influence among the people. Tendencies within the party which were opposed to this national direction were expelled. There were then mass resignations from the party. It wasn't until June 17, 1953 that the KPD changed its line, along with the USSR's new concept of Germany.

In June 1953, there were protest actions in East Germany against increased working hours and declining conditions. There were also calls for free elections. Despite being banned, there were strikes and demonstrations on June 17th, many of which ended in clashes. The Soviet military took up positions outside government buildings with orders to fire. With 25 people dead and many others wounded, the West began to speak of a "popular uprising". That's why West Germany thereafter celebrated June 17th as a national holiday, the "Day of German Unity".

During parliamentary elections in West Germany in September 1953, the KPD's share of the vote fell to 2.2%, down from the 5.7% it had won back in 1949. The number of members continued to steadily decline, and by 1956 there were fewer than 50,000 party members. The KPD also continued to lose its influence in the trade unions, coupled with a campaign, nearly complete by 1954, by the DGB trade union leadership to exclude the communists.

The death of Stalin in 1953 led to a change of direction in the policies of the Soviet Union. From now on, the USSR sought "peaceful coexistence" with the capitalist West. The CPSU, which had previously sought worldwide revolution, changed its approach to the "peaceful transition to socialism". The system would now be changed through parliamentary means. Therefore, the KPD traded its own revolutionary terminology for more modern tones.

This new direction did not result in any positive political developments. Isolated and reduced to a meaningless, splintered party, the KPD was banned by West Germany's Constitutional Court in August 1956. But the party retained a cadre apparatus, allowing the party structures to continue to function in illegality.

But the process of collapse could not be stopped. The legal persecution of the party resulted in a climate of political isolation and wariness. An individual who faced trial for being active in an illegal organization, the KPD, would at the very least lose their job. More problems came after August 13, 1961, when East Germany sealed off its



Troops guard East Germany's state border at the Brandenburg Gate, August 1961.

borders and began building the Berlin Wall. Communists who were true to the party line defended the Wall, saying it was a line of defense against a threatened military attack by the West. But it was clear that East Germany was seeking to stop the mass migration to the West, something which was destabilizing its economy.

The Balance Of Fear

As the Soviets pursued their "policy of coexistence", the USA and its partners were following a "policy of non-interference". Neither the June 17th events in East Germany, nor the building of the Berlin Wall, nor the armed uprising in Hungary in 1956, not even the "Prague Spring" of 1968 led to any words of protest. A major reason behind this was the technical advances in the field of weapons of mass destruction. Atomic weapons in particular gave both Super Powers the ability to destroy the entire world several times over.

Because nearly all the states of Europe had joined behind the Super Powers in either NATO or the Warsaw Pact, the threat of nuclear war hung over the world like the Sword of Damocles. The possibility of total destruction meant that wars or instability were too risky. A "balance of fear" is the best way to describe this situation, cemented by the "Iron Curtain", the border which ran through Europe, guarded by watch towers, barbed wire, and mine fields, splitting the region into East and West. While a standoff reigned in Europe, the rest of the world was in upheaval. The peoples of Afri-

ca and Asia were fighting against European colonialism for decades, and new nation states were founded. In many countries in Latin America, revolutions seemed close to victory. The influence of both Super Powers on these processes made the "East-West conflict" the dominant political theme in the world.

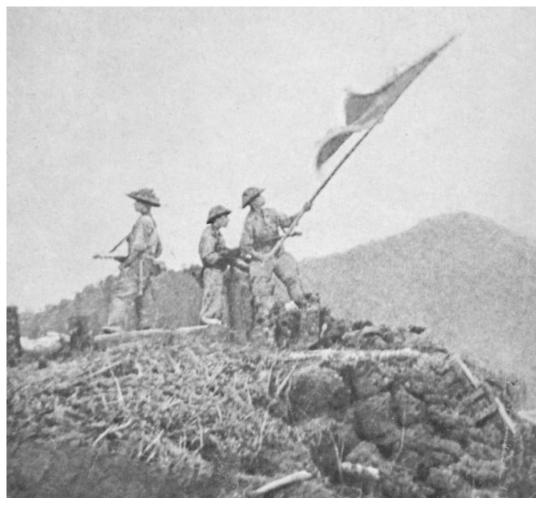
Lighting In The East

The "East-West conflict" wasn't the only theme of global importance, however. Without a doubt, the founding of the People's Republic of China was one of the most significant changes in the world after 1945.

For twenty years, a civil war had shaken China. Close to defeat, the Chinese Red Army saved itself in 1934/35 by means of a great military achievement, known in history as "The Long March". During this operation, Mao Tse-tung took over the leadership of the army and the Communist Party, and he led both to victory in 1949. But the Soviet line of Stalin and that of the Maoists soon began to differentiate.

In 1960, during a conference of 81 communist and workers' parties in Moscow, the conflict escalated when the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chairman of the Albanian PAA (Albanian Labor Party) objected to the "class revisionist and traitorous tendencies of the CPSU". The communist world soon split, and China and the Soviet Union came to the brink of war on a number of occasions.

After a bitter 55day battle, French colonial troops lost Fort Dien Bien Phu in May 1954. Vietnamese revolutionary forces raise their own flag over the captured fort.



Vietnam And Cuba

There were two other world political developments which played an important role in the thought and development of the left following 1945.

Of particular significance was the Vietnam War. French Indochina was occupied by Japan during the Second World War. After Japan's surrender, France re-occupied the region. The leader of Vietnam's communists, Ho Chi Minh, proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945. But the French sought to reassert their colonialist power.

Starting in 1946, a partisan war began against the French occupiers. The USA supported France, China supported the Vietnamese rebels. With the fall of Fort Dien Bien Phu in 1954, the French declared that they would pull out of Vietnam.

After the Geneva Indochina Accord, the country was divided into North and South Vietnam. North Vietnam had a communist government, while South Vietnam was propped up by the USA. American troops provoked a conflict, providing an excuse to go to war against North Vietnam. The USA waged this war like a campaign of annihilation. Between 1961 and 1975,

American planes dropped 7.8 million tons of bombs on Vietnam, double the total used during the Second World War. Huge tracts of forest were sprayed with chemicals and deforested, and there were several massacres and acts of brutality against the civilian population. North Vietnam, outnumbered and outgunned, achieved the impossible. For the first time in history, the USA lost a war. This victory of David over Goliath seemed to prove that a people's struggle for freedom could not be defeated by mere technical superiority. After more than 30 years of fighting, the war in Indochina ended in 1976 with the founding of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. A wave of sympathy from the left also greeted the victory of the revolution in the island nation of Cuba in 1959. For the first time ever, a guerrilla strategy, not supported by a majority of the population, had been successful. In the 1960s, the figure of Che Guevara took on mythic proportions. In 1965, this revolutionary gave up his government offices and posts. He wanted to spread revolution to other countries. At first he joined the resistance movement in Zaire, then he attempted to organize guerrilla warfare in Bolivia. It was there that Che Guevara was captured and executed in 1967.

Chapter II

Economic Wonder and revolts

Together with the USA, West Germany became a frontline, anti-communist state. Integration to the West, capitalist restructuring, and economic reconstruction measures like the Marshall Plan were the factors whose complex interaction led to an enormous development and modernization push. The "economic wonder" of the 1950s came about. Bombed out cities were rebuilt in just a few years. Economic growth with full-employment and expanding industrial production created a consumer society in which all desires could seemingly be fulfilled. A person's own car, their own home, vacation trips, these became the status symbols of the new standard of living, something which hadn't been seen before in Germany. This economic boom led people who had experienced the scarcity of the war and post-war period to identify with the capitalist Federal Republic of Germany. And the society, as before, was still influenced by the Imperial and Nazi eras. The anti-communism which was developed under fascism was expanded into the anti-communism of the Adenauer government. Any progressive critique of the system or the society was suspect. Technological development and cultural changes, however, led to increasingly big contradictions with the society's old values. The reactionary policies of the government heightened such tensions. A generation gap with definite political contours was the result. The rigid structures of higher learning led to academic youths seizing the political initiative in the 1960s. The state apparatus and society responded to the student movement with crass rejection and brutality. On June 2, 1967, the Shah of Persia, the head of the dictatorial regime in Iran supported by the USA, paid a visit to West Berlin. Students took to the streets. That morning, Iranian intelligence officers joined in with West Berlin police in beating back demonstrators, but that evening, thousands of people occupied the square outside of the German Opera. Police were ordered to clear the square, which they did with brutal violence. During the police attack, a cop named Kurras shot to death a student named Benno Ohnesorg with a pointblank bullet to the head.

New Fields Of Politics

The resistance in the 1960s broke with old interpretations and opened up new fields of politics, mainly in three different areas: the women's movement, the anti-authoritarian movement, and new communist tendencies. This new movement is usually described as the "New Left".

For anti-authoritarians, there can be no revolution without a revolutionization of daily life. The activists themselves became the field of change, and social power structures were to be replaced with anti-authoritarian relations. Communes provided a new means of living together. Long hair and ragged clothing were visible signs of rejecting social conventions. Forms of action were based on provocation. The group 'Kommune 1', formed in 1966 in West Berlin, exemplified this.

But anti-authoritarian experiments represented only a part of the student movement. The movement's organizational body was the Socialist German Students' Union (SDS). Founded in 1946 as an SPD student group, the Marxist orientation of SDS caused it to be split off from the social democrats in 1960. This allowed SDS to develop into an umbrella organization for the student movement. When the "Grand Coalition" government of SPD-CDU was in power from 1966-69, SDS reached its highpoint as the regime pushed through a series of Emergency Laws ('Notstandsgesetze').

These laws made it possible for the German government to declare a state of emergency, suspend all fundamental rights, and rule by decree. A historical parallel to the series of laws which allowed the fascists in 1933 to launch the Nazi dictatorship was now at hand. A broad spectrum of leftist groups united to resist the passing of the Emergency Laws, forming the Extra-Parliamentary Opposition (APO).

Together with SDS, the APO had a nationwide organizational structure at its disposal.

In 1968, the Emergency Laws were passed. The APO, which had based its existence on resistance to these laws, fell apart soon after they were enacted.

Poster about the murder of student Benno Ohnesorg by police during an anti-Shah demonstration in West Berlin on June 2,1967.



Werner, Hans-Ulrich

vor 1945: August 1944 Erster Stabsoffizier beim SS- und Polizeiführer Oberitalien Mitte; verantwortlich für die Ausarbeitung der Operationen der Gendarmerie- und Polizeikommandos gegen die Zivilbevölkerung nach 1945: Polizeioberrat; Stellvertretender Leiter des Polizeiinstituts Hiltrup; jetzt Kommandeur der Westberliner Schutzpolizei

The New Women's Movement

Despite anti-authoritarian experiments and communist claims, there is gender-specific oppression within the leftist movement. This experience led women to begin organizing independently to fight against patriarchal structures in the society and in their own lives. In the post-war era, women began

to take on jobs more and more, but when the economic crisis of the 1960s set in, an attempt was made to force women out of the job market. The traditional role of women as housewives and mothers was propagated once again. At the same time, the liberalization of sexual mores was propagated as well. Since the mid-1960s, the pill had made it possible for women to experience their sexuality without fear of pregnancy. However, this "sexual liberation" was often not a path to women's sexual self-determination, rather to noncommittal sexual availability for men.

Every day, women active in the student movement noticed a contradiction between revolutionary theory and praxis with their own bodies. "Their" men practiced patriarchal oppression both in their personal relationships as well as in political groups. Criticisms were rejected. It was said that gender was a personal matter, a "secondary contradiction" that could be dealt with when the revolution was over. Women weren't willing to accept such ignorance. In January 1968, women from

SDS in Berlin from the Action Council For The Liberation Of Women started "women's councils" and women's discussion circles at different universities. At the 23rd SDS Delegates Conference in Frankfurt in September 1968, leading SDS functionaries were hit with flying tomatoes in front of live TV cameras after a fiery speech by Helke Sanders, spokeswoman for the Action Council For The Liberation Of Women. That was the opening salvo of the new women's movement. Next, women's groups began to address the question of children. A new movement started up to deal with emancipatory models of education for children.

The women's movement went outside the confines of the universities with the campaign to abolish Paragraph 218, Germany's anti-abortion law. Following an initiative in France, 374 women published a statement declaring: "I had an abortion." Groups involved in this 'Aktion 218' campaign launched several actions calling for Paragraph 218 to be scrapped. Women from across the political spectrum, from political parties, trade unions, and autonomous socialist groups, took part in this campaign. It became the crystallization point for the new women's movement. But when the Constitutional Court turned down any changes in 1975, many women pulled out of politics disappointed. The women's movement became polarized and splintered. Women active in trade unions, political parties, and "K-groups" (communist parties of the New Left) organized activities such as the revival of March 8th as International Women's Day. Others became active in various women's projects. In the early 1970s, women's centers, self-help groups, women's bookstores, publishing companies, and women's living collectives were founded. From these developed the "institutionalized" women's movement, whose projects were partly financed with public funds. State finances gave these projects a certain continuity - many still exist today. But on the other hand, increasing professionalization pushed the original feminist concepts to the background.

The End And A New Beginning

The rubbing of shoulders between the SPD and the CDU brought about the APO and led to the radicalization of the student movement. This was evident with the International Vietnam Congress held in February 1968. The congress took place at Berlin Technical University under the motto: "For The Victory Of The Revolution In Vietnam! The Duty Of A Revolutionary Is To Make Revolution!"

Support for the revolution in Vietnam marked a militant turning point.

Another significant event for both the APO and SDS was the attempted assassination of Rudi Dutschke, one of best known leaders of the student movement. The shots which seriously wounded Dutschke in April 1968 came after a continued media smear campaign, especially from the Springer Press corporation and its tabloid newspaper 'Bild-Zeitung'. The student movement reacted with nationwide demonstrations and attempts to halt the delivery of Springer publications. Newspapers and delivery trucks went up in flames and there were clashes with police. The critique of Springer soon expanded into a broad campaign.

The time of the APO movement saw the further development and radicalization of different tendencies, and a spectrum comprised of the women's movement, anti-authoritarians, and communist-oriented groups came into existence, which was not integrated into a single unified organization. But the dissolution of SDS in February 1970 was a significant event. After this, a large number of organizations, circles, and initiatives were formed.

The Youth Center Movement

Youths in particular were caught up in the spirit of political renewal which came after the decline of the student movement. Traditional forms of youth organizing based around churches or other associations could not offer anything to youths who were looking for emancipatory and independent free spaces for their culture. The biggest mass youth movement in Germany soon united behind

the demand for "self-run youth centers". This movement did not stem from any one social class and it was organized autonomously. In both urban and rural areas, initiatives for youth centers were sprouting up. The results varied from place to place, depending on the local conditions and the make up of the movement. But left-wing activists were in the majority. In some places, associations were founded to push for the creation of a youth center. In other areas, buildings were squatted, and in this way it was often possible win a youth center. But sometimes there were evictions and clashes with the police. The continual confrontations with politicians, authorities, and the police politicized many youths.

In their praxis, youth center (JZ) activists were different from the often elite and promotion-oriented student activists, as well as the party structures of the K-groups. Members of the communist K-groups often referred to JZ activists as 'Spontis'. They used this term in a derogatory manner to describe the spontaneous nature and seeming lack of concept of the youth center movement. But some people in the JZ movement actually started using the term 'Sponti' themselves.

Because the youth center movement wasn't based in the factories, rather it had to do with people's free time, the communist K-groups were very skeptical. They saw its focus as based more on a secondary contradiction in the society. Those in the youth center movement who did do theory equated free time with the production sector and gave them equal importance in the revolutionary



Graphic from the 1970s, calling for the abolition of the section 218 abortion law, by an unknown artist.

15

The most famous poster by SDS. The original motif was from a poster advertizing Germany's railways. "Everybody talks about the weather. Not us."



process. They viewed youth centers as places where "working class and middle class youths" could come together and discover, experience, and formulate their needs together.

This was viewed as a political learning process, which in conjunction with self-administration would be lead to self-education (self-socialization). Organized base democratically, general assemblies would be the highest decision making bodies. This form of organizing brings to mind the councilist workers' movement.

The highpoint of the youth center movement was from 1971-74. After that, the movement declined and went through many changes. Much of this had to do with the SDP-liberal coalition government which came to power in 1970. Under the SPD, youth centers became part of the state's youth program. Towns and cities used social workers to take care of youths, and youth centers were run by the state. Money for jobs and renovations for the centers was made available.

Even in the most rural areas, which had never had a youth center, at the very least some sort of space was made available for youths. This institutionalization robbed the youth center movement of its anti-capitalist element. It became nothing more than something which dealt with free time, and youth culture was integrated into the system.

At the same time, those youth centers which refused to take this course faced evictions and increased criminalization. Initiatives failed due to the inherent contradictions, and many activists gave up. Other activists took on jobs as social wor-

kers. After 1974, youth centers were no longer the focus of a political movement. But many projects continued to exist under changed conditions. The political praxis of squatting, which was used by the youth center movement, was the basis of the 1980s squatters' movement. And other elements such as plenary decision making bodies were re-discovered by the autonomist movement in the 1980s.

The Communist Tradition

Communist elements from the APO reformed themselves in the 1970s as communist parties or groups. Characteristic of these K-groups, as they were called, was their militant appearance, in that they rejected the direction of previous communist groups and the Soviet Union. These new communist parties primarily oriented themselves towards the ideas of Mao Tse-tung and the People's Republic of China.



Demonstration in Bochum, 1969.

Chapter III

The New Left



Alongside the KPD, which was operating underground, a whole series of small groups sprouted forth from the student movement, calling themselves red cells or communist associations. These small groups made use of the experiences and discussions of the APO movement regarding political content, eventually forming into Maoist-oriented parties.

The formation of the New Left in Germany was affected by changes in political conditions. Despite the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Vietnam War during the presidency of John F. Kennedy in the USA, a period of relative global political relaxation known as the "Kennedy Era" had an affect on the foreign policies of Germany as well.

It was also in 1966/67 that Germany experienced its first economic recession. This economic decline made it clear to many people that a one-sided economic fixation on the West would have negative effects.

As a highly-developed, export-oriented nation in the center of Europe, Germany needed to open its markets to the East. Willy Brandt of the SPD represented this shift in policy, and his tenure as Foreign Minister during a grand coalition government ushered in a political change of course for Germany.

Because the banning of the KPD could present a problem in negotiations with Warsaw Pact states, the SPD in 1966 began to openly discuss lifting the ban on communist parties. The conditions for this would be that they respect the Constitution, meaning a change in statutes with respect to a revolutionary program. The possibility to organize legally was quickly seized upon.

Splits

The rift between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China also had an effect upon communists in West Germany. A Maoist faction split off from the illegal KPD, forming the KPD/ML. The K-groups also dubbed the Soviet Union as "revisionist" and began to speak of both U.S. and Soviet imperialism, stating that both needed to be struggled against. Communists who oriented themselves towards the Soviet Union dismissed the K-groups as "left-wing extremist, petty bourgeois sects". There was bitter enmity between both tendencies, making joint mobilizations impossible.

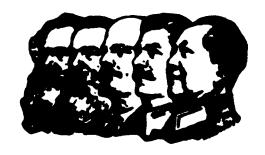
The New Communist Parties

In 1968, there were two formations which grew out of the underground KPD, the Moscow-oriented DKP and the pro-China KPD/ML. From 1970 to 1973, the KPD/AO (the letters AO, which stood for "Formative Organization", were soon dropped), the KBW, and the KB grew out of the student movement. These groups formed the spectrum of K-groups which were politically active in Germany in the 1970s. All of these communist parties and associations saw themselves as part of the tradition from the Weimar era KPD. The question of which of them was the legitimate communist party formed the basis of many of their internal feuds. But unlike the historical KPD, none of these new organizations had any kind of mass base. In this situation, the K-groups became cadre organizations with a Leninist vanguard outlook. Each of these parties claimed to represent the true revolutionary line and the vanguard of the working class in the struggle for communism. These groups often isolated and attacked one another. The lines of division weren't only Moscow versus China, the Maoist groups themselves even attakked each other. In the entire history of K-groups in Germany, there was only ever one joint action: In September 1977, when the CDU decided to seek a ban on the KBW, the KPD, and the KPD/ML, all three organizations called for a joint demonstration in Bonn on October 8, 1977. Their cooperation never got any closer than this.

Revolutionary Idealism

The period of formation of the various parties on the New Left was characterized by a sense of revolutionary idealism. Most young activists were fully dedicated and willing to accept strict party discipline. In order to build up the party apparatus and make it function, they were willing to dedicate their entire lives to the party. Of course, this meant great intrusions into their private sphere as well. This made it possible for all K-groups, within a short period of time, to build up effective organizational structures, with newspapers, publishing houses, headquarters, and full-time party workers.

But the hard discipline of communist organizations had a difficult flip side to it as well. Party activists in the 1970s saw revolution as a real possibility, something which could be achieved in a few



The NPD congress on June 17, 1978 in Frankfurt." Meanwhile, some 2,000 people had gathered... As a loudspeaker began blaring KBW workers' music. a masked troop emerged from the middle of the crowd and rushed the metal barriers. Groups of twenty to thirty people, wearing helmets and armed with work tools (and

some police truncheons), took turns hitting at police, and twice were able to rip down the metal barriers. Globs of paint and muck were hurled as well. A few critical minutes passed before sufficient police forces could assemble at this spot..." FAZ, June 19, 1978

years and personally experienced. This vision of the future was cemented with party doctrine, based on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism. This in conjunction with hierarchical organizing created a political identity which did not allow for critique or the recognition of mistakes. People who deviated from the party line or who refused party commands were rigorously excluded. The politics of the K-groups, therefore, were more based on their own perceptions rather than actual social conditions. The primary goal of all of these communist party organizations was to move beyond the student sphere and seek out the revolutionary potential of the working class. Activists quit their studies and gave up academic life in order to organize the workers in the factories. These attempts failed. The activists were neither understood nor accepted by the workers, they were repressed by the trade unions, and the young communist idealists became isolated. The K-groups remained primarily student organizations. By the middle of the 1970s, the organizations had become stagnant. It was thought that increased activities could overcome this situation. But no matter how eagerly they distributed newspapers at factories in the early morning hours, during strikes, or at demonstrations, it had no effect. Eventually, this exhaustive and useless actionism turned against the organizations themselves. The lack of results

and the repressive nature inside the organizations caused more and more members to quit. In the end, the total collapse of the organizations led to personal disappointment and identity crises for many former activists. In 1980, the K-groups started to disband. The first was the KPD/AO, which once had 900 members during its highpoint in 1975. The KB lapsed into lethargy in 1983, and the KBW dissolved itself in 1985. The KPD/ML, which had around 800 members in 1977, sank to less to than 400 by the middle of the 1980s. In October 1986, the group unified with the Group of International Marxists (GIM), a Trotskyist group with around 200 members, to form the United Socialist Party (VSP). But this fusion could not stop the downward trend, and when all was said and done, the VSP itself had less than 200 members. In the 1990s, members of the VSP saw their future in the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS). In June 1995, the VSP officially gave up its party status. Today, there is only one relatively big party which traces its ideological roots to the old K-groups, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD), which formed from the KABD in 1982. In 1998, the MLPD had 2,500 members.

The history of the K-groups had an important influence on the development of the autonomist movement. For that reason, two of the most important organizations in the 1970s will be sketched out below.

The Communist Union Of West Germany (KBW)

At its organizational height in 1976/77, the largest of the K-groups, the KBW, founded in 1973, had around 2,500 members and 1,000 close sympathizers. The group placed a priority on being "close to the people" in its public appearances in



neighborhoods and at bookstands. This meant that members had a very respectable outer appearance, such as orderly clothes and short hair, in contrast to the long-hair trend of that period. During big demonstrations, the group was characterized by its tight and militant appearance. The use of a soundcar by the KBW – and some other K-groups – during demonstrations also made the group unique.

The KBW felt that doing compulsory military service in the German army gave people good exposure to weapons training and provided a new arena for agitation. Its activists formed soldier and reservist committees (SRK), which took part in soldier and reservist public events, and which were also responsible for military style training exercises within the KBW.

After a steady decline in membership, the KBW suffered a heavy blow in September 1980 when 600 people split off to form the BWK. The KBW was left with 1,500 members, but was no longer able to organize any memorable activities. On February 6, 1985, the final members' assembly of the KBW, a meeting of about 100 people, formally dissolved the organization. The BWK also saw its membership steadily decline, but was able to stabilize its organizational apparatus. The fewer than 400 remaining BWK members eventually joined the PDS, forming the "Working Group of West German Communists in and around the PDS". In March 1995, the final delegates' meeting officially ended the party status of the BWK.

The Communist Union (KB)

The KB was formed in 1971. Although the KB and the KBW had similar roots, the two were bitter rivals. The KB often ridiculed the soundcars, the SRK, and other forms of organizing by the KBW.

The political line of the KB was formed by a "leading committee", whose members weren't elected but rather "cooperated", so they were chosen but not publicly known. By the mid 1970s, the KB had about 1,700 members across West Germany, mainly concentrated in Hamburg. The political tactics of the KB consisted of engaging in political movements. At the time, that meant the antinuclear movement and the anti-fascist movement. One of the most important themes in KB theory was the "fascification" of West Germany. As democratic rights were rolled back, laws were being tightened and the police and intelligence agencies given greater freedom, and these were viewed as signs of a new fascism. So the struggle against fascism could not be limited to taking on Nazi gangs, but also the expanding police state.



The KB And The Greens

In the spring of 1977, a decisive political event took place, which had begun in the state of Lower Saxony. There, resistance had gone on for years against a planned atomic facility in the town of Gorleben, and a small group calling itself the "Green List" decided to run in state elections. Shortly thereafter, regional Green, rainbow, and alternative lists took part in elections all across Germany. In January 1980, most of these joined together and formed a nationwide political party known as "The Greens".

The founding congress of the Green Party decided on proposals from regional rainbow and alternative lists. This approach soon revealed a serious conflict. Members of the Greens were primarily from citizens' initiatives, whereas rainbow and alternative list members were primarily leftists.

What followed was a parallel development. In regional elections, an Alternative List either competed against the Greens, or sometime they joined together on a joint list. In nearly every city or region where there was a great leftist potential, there was an Alternative List in addition to the Green Party. The Alternative List parties were heavily influenced by the former K-groups, especially the KB. The development of the Alternative List was met with euphoric hopes, for it seemed to be a possibility for giving parliamentary relevance to leftist politics. One example of this can be seen in a citation from the KB's newspaper 'Arbeiterkampf' (AK – Workers' Struggle), which described the Alternative List in the stronghold of Hamburg.

Poster for the only joint action by the K-groups, October 1977. "Away with the propositions for bans on KBW, KPD, KPD/ML! Freedom of organisation for the working class! Marxism-Leninism can't be prohibited!"

Poster of the Greens shortly after their foundation. The "Bundesadler". the national symbol actually never began to sway, since the politics of the Greens have turned to a conform and stabilizing "alternative" character.



In AK #214, December 7, 1981, the cover page featured a big photo of the Alternative List's founding congress, with the title "Alternative List Hamburg Founded".

The text read as follows: "Amid great cheers from the 500 people on hand, the AL Hamburg was founded, and later that evening the party already had 300 members. The AL chose the beaver as its party symbol. (A beaver is able to gnaw its way into anything, it can build dams to stop coming floods, and it's able to live in areas where it had become extinct before – proof of its necessity.)"

But the list's success was limited to its initial phase. Most of these lists soon fell apart, others became citizens' lists allied with the Greens. In addition to using the Alternative List as a way to gain influence, there was another variant as well. Inside the KB, one faction called itself 'Zentrum' (the "center"). This group wanted to join the Greens and make leftist politics there. At the end of 1979, this center group, known as 'Gruppe Z', split off from the KB with 200 members. The KB was left with about 700 members in 1980. 'Gruppe Z' (Group Z) soon developed its own organizational work.

It criticized the positions of Leninism and tried to synthesize Marxism and ecology. Group Z was initially successful: In 1982, one of its members was a national spokesperson for the Greens. By means of the GAL party in Hamburg, several Group Z members won seats in the local assembly. In 1983, Group Z disbanded and most of its members went on working for the Greens. The KB was in swift decline by that point as well. In June 1983,

the KB advised its members in Hamburg to join the Greens. In October, the Alternative List was disbanded and became the GAL, the Green Alternative List.

The KB kept its organizational structure intact until 1991, although it had no practical impulses. On April 20, 1991, the KB in Hamburg officially disbanded.

DKP, The Old Line

The DKP occupied a unique position within the ranks of communist organizations founded after 1968. The DKP was the only party which defended the politics of East Germany and the Soviet Union as the correct line.

The party cadre were from the illegal KPD, and they tried win as many members as they could from the time before 1933 and the 1950s. Because of its ties to tradition, members of the DKP were usually older and more working class than those in the K-groups. But the development of the party's membership ranks in the younger generation, especially among students and academics, was successful.

The DKP was very legalistic, and tried to rub shoulders with trade unions and the SPD. One important field of agitation for the DKP was Germany's Constitution, the progressive elements of which the KPD felt were being prevented by the policies of the government in Bonn. The DKP strived to be a party in line with the Constitution and the defender of the Constitution's progressive elements. The party strictly rejected militancy and illegal actions. The DKP remained the biggest of all the new communist parties in West Germany. In 1986, the DKP had more than 40,000 members

The relatively big organization of the DKP was made possible with support from the DDR. Financial, material, and political support made the DKP apparatus dependent upon the East German SED. And direct strategy planning from the SED made it impossible for the DKP to have an independent political line. For example, the party's line on issues such as atomic energy or the national census were contradictory and almost unbelievable, making it impossible for them to be part of the resistance movement.

When West Germany annexed the DDR, the organization suffered an incredible organizational collapse. Entire party sections were disbanded, and since the party could no longer finance itself, many members resigned. But the party did not disappear completely. It was older comrades in particular who held the party together, and in 1998 the DKP still had around 6.000 members.

Chapter IV

Armed groups





The Second Of June Movement

anti-authoritarian scene in West Berlin in

Named after the date when Benno Ohnesorg was murdered, the "Second of June Movement" arose from the militant

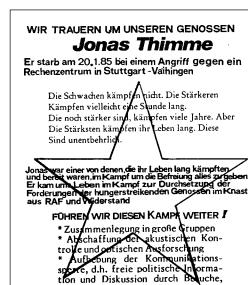
1971. In June 1972, the group published their political program. Point three read as follows: "The Movement only sees itself as the avanguard in so far as it was among the first to take up arms. It is not the vanguard because it calls itself such." The strategy of the Second of June Movement was to draw from the guerrilla concept in Latin America and to combine that with "legal" struggles. Point ten of the program read: "... For us, praxis means: Creating militant legal groups, creating militias, creating an urban guerrilla - until we have an army of the people." The Second of June Movement saw itself as an urban guerrilla group, limited to West Berlin. In particular by means of spectacular actions, like handing out chocolate candies during bank robberies, the group received a great deal of attention. The highpoint for the Second of June Movement was the kidnapping of regional CDU leader Peter Lorenz in 1975. By means of this action, the group was able to win freedom for five imprisoned members of the Red Army Fraction (RAF). A short time after the Lorenz kidnapping, leading members of the Second of June Movement were arrested. During searches for group members, a shootout with police took place in Cologne in May 1975. Werner Sauber, a member of the Second of June Movement, and a policeman were killed. After the state's success in cracking down on the group, the Second of June Movement only made itself heard of by means of trial statements and texts from imprisoned activists. In June 1980, the group dissolved itself and became part of the RAF. That same month, three members of the Second of June Movement jailed in Moabit Prison in Berlin, Ralf Reinders, Klaus Viehmann, and Ronald Fritsch, released a paper stating their opposition to this decision.

The Red Army Fraction (RAF)

In 1968, in protest against the war in Vietnam, four people, among them Andreas Baader and Gudrun Ensslin, set off incendiary devices inside shopping centers in Frankfurt. All four were soon arrested and sent to prison. While in prison, Andreas Baader developed close ties to a journalist named Ulrike Meinhof. From this came the idea to break Andreas Baader out of prison in May 1970, the first action by the RAF. At the end of 1970, the group went to Jordan to train with the Palestinian organization 'Al Fatah'. In the spring of 1971, a paper was released entitled, "Red Army Fraction – The Concept Of The Urban Guerrilla". The text read as follows: "The concept of the urban guerrilla comes from Latin America. It is there what it can also be here: a revolutionary means of intervention by relatively weak revolutionary forces. "The RAF defined itself as "an anti-imperialist fighting group, which is not part of the struggles here, but rather of the struggles taking place in the Third World".

The First Actions By The RAF

After two years underground, the RAF carried out six attacks in May 1972. Two of these were against the U.S. army, three against police and the courts, and one against the Springer corporation. A few weeks after these attacks, some RAF members were arrested. In September 1974, the RAF prisoners began their third hungerstrike against their prison conditions. After 56 days, Holger Meins died as a result of being forced fed. After this, the RAF's "Commando Holger Meins" occupied the German Embassy in Stockholm in April 1975 and offered to exchange the hostages in return for the release of the 26 imprisoned RAF members. In order to illustrate their resolve, the RAF commando executed Germany's military attache at the beginning of the occupation. When police units stormed the embassy, the commando set off explosive charges. During the raid, one diplomat and one RAF member, Ulrich Wessel, were killed, and the building went up in flames. Five other com-



Death notice for Johannes Thimme.

Briefe und Bücher.

KÄMPFEN WIR ZUSAMMEN MIT DEN GEFANGENEN FÜR DIE DURCHSETZUNG IHRER FORDERUNGEN!

bodyguards were shot to death on the street. The RAF commando responsible called the act an execution of Buback, who was responsible for the murders of Holger Meins, Ulrike Meinhof, and Siegfried Hausner. In July, a RAF commando shot and killed a top executive of the Dresdner Bank, Jurgen Ponto. In September, a RAF commando kidnapped the president of the German Employers' Association, Hanns-Martin Schleyer.

Buback

During the Schleyer kidnapping, four bodyguards were killed. The RAF wanted to exchange Schleyer for imprisoned RAF comrades. To add weight to this demand, a Palestinian commando hijacked a Lufthansa jet full of German tourists on Mallorca. The commando shot the pilot and threatened to kill all the hostages. A special GSG-9 antiterrorist police unit stormed the plane as it waited on the runway in Mogadishu, Somalia. All the members of the Palestinian commando were shot and killed, except for one woman who survived, seriously wounded. Immediately following this,

Sticker created front militants. "The front emerges as a fighting movement!"



mando members were arrested by the police. Among them was Siegfried Hauswho despite ner, being seriously wounded was flown to Stammheim Prison, The "German Autumn" and soon died.

One year later, in the night of May 8, 1976, Ulrike Meinhof was found hanged in her cell. In 1977, the RAF launched a major offensive. In April, Federal Prosecutor Siegfried

and

two

RAF prisoners Jan Carl Raspe, Andreas Baader, and Gudrun Ensslin were found shot to death or hanged in their isolation cells in Stammheim. Irmgard Moller survived, seriously wounded. The next day, October 19, 1977, police found the body of Hanns-Martin Schleyer in the trunk of a car.

The reaction of the German state to the RAF's offensive has become known as the "German Autumn". This period was marked by an unprecedented media smear campaign against alleged RAF "sympathizers". Any and everyone suspected of being sympathetic to the RAF was considered a potential member or at least a supporter of the organization. Police surveillance, house raids, and arrests were the order of the day. Laws regarding political crimes were greatly sharpened. Between 1977 and 1981, the RAF carried out only one attack. In June 1979, a RAF commando detonated a bomb near the motorcade of U.S. General Alexander Haig, the head of NATO, in Mons, Belgium. Haig survived unhurt.

From February to April 1981, RAF prisoners organized a hungerstrike, which was called off following the death of Sigurd Debus. Two RAF actions followed that summer: a bomb attack in August on the headquarters of the U.S. air force in Europe, the NATO base in Ramstein, and a rocket attack on U.S. General Kroesen, who was uniniured.

The Front Concept

In May 1982, the RAF released a communique entitled, "Guerrilla, Resistance, And The Anti-Imperialist Front", which expanded upon the group's ideological and strategic concept. This "May Paper" criticized the 1977 offensive, in particular the plane hijacking, and called the efforts a failure. But the RAF's self-criticism was restrained. The RAF said 1977 reached a historic dimension. a year with positive effects on the resistance movement. A victory was seen in the fact that the state was not able to destroy the RAF. And the subsequent wave of repression from the state apparatus was deemed positive as well, since it forced the entire resistance to make a stand either for or against the RAF. The RAF saw such clear distinctions as proof of its vanguard position. From this point of view, all true opposition forces were oriented to the RAF – or they didn't exist at all. "The Autumn of 1977 gave all fundamental opposition groups new relations and conditions for existence – as actual experience and the perspective for future struggles, all were forced to fundamentally reorient themselves to the powers – or to give up. ... From this new

experience, the necessity of the guerrilla is an easy step for consciousness: If the struggle of the guerrilla is your own, then the only logical realization of this is to politically and practically join the strategy of the guerrilla yourself, at whatever level." (May Paper)

The RAF developed this idea of an "anti-imperialist front" in the metropoles as part of the global struggle for liberation. Practically speaking, this meant a three-part approach.

At the center were the "military actions" of the RAF commandos, accompanied by activities and attacks by "militants" and further agitation by a broader spectrum of supporters. That need not, however, imply any organizational connection. Independently operating groups from the resistance movement would orient themselves towards RAF activities. This concept was summarized in the slogan: "The Front Is Created As A Fighting Movement!"

The "front strategy" of the RAF did not have any substantial success. Only during hungerstrikes by RAF prisoners was it possible to mobilize broader forces from the resistance. The RAF's "military actions" were only taken up by the immediate field of supporters. These groups, various "Anti-Torture Committees" and anti-fascist groups, had been set up in the 1970s to do prisoner support work for the RAF.

The antifa groups at that time understood fascism to be the "fascism" of West Germany, in particular as it was illustrated by prison conditions and police state measures. From these came the "anti-imperialist groups" which developed in the early 1980s. A major focal point for 'antiimps' was prisoner work. In addition to this, RAF communiques and actions were discussed and an attempt was made to communicate these within the broader resistance and to support corresponding initiatives.

In addition to the front concept, the RAF in the 1980s also did theory on the "military-industrial complex". An indivisible link was seen between the military, industry, and the political elite in the imperialist states. Targets of attack, therefore, could not only be the military and repression apparatus, but also industrialists and politicians.

Shortly after publishing the May Paper, the RAF suffered a heavy blow in November 1982. With the arrest of Adelheid Schulz, Brigitte Mohnhaupt, and Christian Klar, three commando members were lost. The subsequent discovery of 13 weapons caches deprived the group of much of its infrastructure. The following years were also marked by serious repression. By 1984, a further 9 RAF members had been imprisoned, and no attacks were carried out during this period.

The New Offensive

It wasn't until December 1984 that the RAF carried out another action, a failed bomb attack on the NATO officers' school in Oberammergau. Another hungerstrike began in December 1984 as well, and it lasted until February 1985. This hungerstrike was accompanied by a wave of attacks which remained unique in the RAF's history. Not only the antiimp spectrum, the autonomist scene also mobilized in support of the hungerstrike. In eight weeks from December to February there were at least 39 major arson and bomb attacks and several smaller actions as well. On January 20, 1985, there was a bomb attack on a computer center in Stuttgart-Vaihingen. The bomb went off prematurely and killed Johannes Thimme. His comrade Claudia Wannersdorfer was seriously wounded and arrested.



Poster mobilizing for Stuttgart in 1987, the 10th anniversary of the deaths in Stammheim. The poster was investigated under Paragraph 129a.

Bundesweite DEMONSTRATION

10 Jahre nach den Morden in Stammheim DER KAMPF GEHT WEITER!

Stuttgart 17.10.87, 11"Uhr Berliner Platz

KUNDGEBUNG in Stammheim

The "West European Guerrilla"

The RAF and the French group 'Action directe' (AD) issued a joint communique in January 1985. Entitled "For The Unity Of Revolutionaries In Western Europe!", the paper propagated the creation of a "West European guerrilla". At the end of January, the AD executed General Rene Audran. On February 1, a RAF commando shot and killed arms industrialist Ernst Zimmermann. Both commandos oriented their actions towards one another. In the communique following the Zimmermann attack, the RAF called on the prisoners to break off their hungerstrike, which soon happened. "The West European Guerrilla Is Shaking

The Imperialist System" was the slogan which united the RAF, the AD, and the Belgian group

Fighting Communist Cells (CCC) in 1985. Despite some ideological differences with the latter, the groups' actions were to be oriented towards one another, and the groups shared logistical cooperation. In the

media, the "West European guerrilla" became public enemy number one, and the concept was very controversial within the militant left. With the arrest of leading members of the CCC in December 1985 and the capture of

four AD members in February 1987, both groups ceased to exist. That ended the short history of the "West European guerrilla".

Emblem of the French guerrilla organization **Action Directe** (AD).

The Air Base Attack

In August 1985, the RAF bombed the U.S. air force's Rhein Main Air Base. In order to gain access to the base, the RAF commando needed an Ame-COMMUNIS

rican ID card, so they lured a U.S. soldier named Pimental out of a disco late one night. He was later killed in the woods to avoid being a witness. Two other people were killed in the bomb attack on the base.

The militant spectrum was critical of the attack, in particular the death of Pimental, which the RAF had called "a practical necessity". All gains with the resistance movement which had been made during the hunger-

strike were now lost.

The criticisms became so intense that the RAF were forced to respond. In January 1986, the RAF released a paper entitled "To Those Who Struggle With Us". It began with the line: "Today, we say that the shooting of the GI in the concrete situation last summer was a mistake which blocked the effects of the attack on the air base and the discussion of the political-military orientation of the action, and the offensive as a whole."

The background to this concession by the RAF was the International Anti-Imperialist Congress which was held in Frankfurt from January 31 to February 4, 1986. This conference, organized by the antiimp spectrum, was attended by representatives from all across Europe and Latin America and was the source of great interest since more than one thousand people took part. Despite threats of being banned, the congress took place anyway, but it was not a success. Autonomists in particular voiced heavy criticisms, particularly in reference to the shooting of the GI, but their critique was aimed at the RAF concept as a whole.

In the summer of 1986, the RAF resumed its campaign of assassinations: the head of the Siemens corporation, Beckurts, and his driver were killed in a bomb attack in July; in October, a ministerial director in the Foreign Ministry, Braunmuhl, was shot. In other words, there was not to be a fundamental shift in strategy by the RAF, and the group remained isolated from wide sectors of the militant movement. But repression from the state apparatus increased: In 1986, RAF member Eva Haule-Frimpong was arrested. Until 1993, the state was not able to arrest any other RAF members. But the anti-imperialist scene suffered an unending series of house raids, arrests, and trials.

The Final Slope To The End

After a lapse in actions in 1987, the RAF changed its strategy starting in 1988. The targets of attack would now have some connection to themes of the resistance movement in Germany.

The failed attack on Finance Secretary Tietmeyer in September 1988 was linked to his involvement in the annual congress of the IMF. And when the head of the Deutsche Bank, Herrhausen, was killed in a bomb attack in November 1989, the RAF's communique for the action also pointed to the IMF and the World Bank. Until 1991 there were a series of sometimes failed attacks by the RAF, and the communiques became increasingly diffuse. On April 1, 1991, a RAF commando shot and killed Rohwedder, head of the 'Treuhandanstalt', the state agency charged with selling off the former East Germany's industries. The RAF stated in their communique that they would, in future, orient themselves more towards intervening in social struggles. The attack on Rohwedder was supposed to be a means of influencing the imagined resistance of the East German people to capitalist restructuring.

It was also at this time that contacts since the early 1980s between the RAF and the DDR's Ministry of State Security, or 'Stasi', became known. Former RAF members who had sought refuge in East Germany were arrested and became state witnesses in trials against former comrades. These Stasi contacts, state witnesses, disagreements among the prisoners, and a seeming lack of clarity among those still living underground led to the dissolution of many anti-imperialist groups. In April 1992, the RAF issued a statement spelling out the re-orientation of their politics. The collapse of real existing socialism and the defeat of liberation movements on the Three Continents had created a totally different situation. The group's vanguard approach was traded for the creation of a "counter-power from below". The statement went

Emblem of the Belgian guerrilla organization Fighting Communist Cells (CCC).



Anti-imperialist congress in Frankfurt 1986. For security reasons, no cameras were allowed. Afterwards, a series of postcards were produced.

on to say: "We have decided to scale back the escalation. That means that we will halt attacks on leading representatives of capital and the state during this present, necessary process." (RAF Communique, April 10, 1992) The RAF's final attack was carried out in March 1993. Shortly before its completion, the new Weiterstadt Prison was blown up.

A final blow was dealt to the RAF in June 1993. For more than a year, the German state was able to get one of its spies, Klaus Steinmetz, close to the commando levels of the RAF. In June 1993, Steinmetz met with RAF members in a train station



restaurant in the town of Bad Kleinen. The meeting was observed by police. During the subsequent arrests, RAF member Wolfgang Grams was killed and Birgit Hogefeld was captured. A member of the special riot police GSG 9 was shot. In March 1998, the RAF announced their disolution.

The Front Militants

The anti-imperialist front propagated in the RAF's May Paper in 1982 did not find much resonance in the leftist scene. In order to get out of this situation, the RAF initiated a "total offensive". On December 4, 1984, prisoners from the RAF, as well as other prisoners in solidarity with them, launched a nine-week hungerstrike. The struggle by the prisoners was accompanied by a wave of attacks. For the first time, the anti-imperialist spectrum carried out major bomb attacks. In conjunction with this, an photocopied underground newspaper called 'Zusammen Kämpfen' ("Struggle Together!") appeared at the end of 1984. The topic of the first issue was the hungerstrike, and a series of action communiques by "underground militants" from nine different groups were printed.

These militants saw themselves as part of the anti-imperialist front in Western Europe, and they acted in the context of the RAF's politics. Their concept of developing "coordinated militant projects", to open a new level in the confrontation, was in line with the course spelled out in the May Paper. The militants, like the RAF, viewed themselves as internationalists. That's why they named their commandos after foreign martyred anti-

Poster in support of a RAF hungerstrike in the mid 1980s. The poster was criminalized under section 129a (support for a terrorist organization).

Unlike the 'Knispelkrant', the publication 'Zusammen Kämpfen' was published and distributed clandestinely in Germany. The magazine roughly appeared quarterly.



imperialists. Starting in 1986, militants began signing their communiques as the "Fighting Unit", with a corresponding commando name just like the RAF.

These underground activists mainly carried out explosives and arson attacks with a high degree of technical sophistication. For example, one "Fighting Unit" detonated a car bomb outside the headquarters of the 'Verfassungsschutz', the federal intelligence agency, in Cologne. These militants never carried out shooting attacks, nor did they direct their actions against persons.

Militants carried out nine attacks in 1986. This highpoint in their activity was followed by a wave of repression. In 1986, many people from the antiimp spectrum were arrested and sentenced for Fighting Unit attacks. This temporarily halted attacks by the militants. But the paper 'Zusammen Kämpfen' was still published periodically until 1991. After the RAF's attack on the head of the Deutsche Bank in November 1989, the Fighting Units carried out four attacks between December 1989 and February 1990. Two bombs were detected and disarmed. Then there were no more Fighting Unit actions.

'De Knispelkrant'

A publication dealing with armed groups was also published in Holland, 'De Knispelkrant'. The paper defined itself as a militant, revolutionary publication with an internationalist focus. The newspaper consisted of a collection of newspaper articles, communiques, and reports from around the world. There were rarely any editorials. As a means of documentation, communiques from different countries were published in their original language. There were texts in English, Dutch, and German, and well as German translations of many texts. 'De Knispelkrant' became the organ of the West European guerrilla and represented the positions of the RAF. Published every two weeks, the paper made it possible to have a continuous exchange of information. Communiques and texts from the RAF and other groups could be sent to subscribers in Germany, while avoiding repression from the German authorities. In 1988, there were conflicts among the editors of 'De Knispelkrant' and clashes with autonomists in Amsterdam. These conflicts led to the end of the project in early

The Revolutionary Cells (RZ)

In 1973, the Revolutionary Cells (RZ) became the third group in West Germany to take up the armed struggle. Although the RZ followed a different concept than the Second of June Movement and the RAF, all three shared the same roots. The Vietnam War was a major impulse which led to the formation of the RZ. They, too, wanted to develop a guerrilla, and just like the RAF, they had close ties to the Palestinian resistance. Just how closely tied the RAF and the RZ were to the Palestinians was shown by the first actions which gained the RZ international recognition. Under the leadership of one of the world's most wanted "top terro-

rists", Ilich Ramirez-Sanchez, otherwise known as "Carlos", a German-Palestinian commando stormed into the OPEC Summit in Vienna in December 1975 and took 11 top government ministers hostage. When the commando stormed the building, three members of the security forces were killed, and RZ mem-

ber Hans-Joachim Klein was seriously wounded. In addition to Klein, RAF member Gabriele Kröcher-Tiedemann took part in the action as well. The kidnapping action was designed to put pressure on Arab states to take a firmer stand against Israel. The ministers were all released in North Africa, and the commando disappeared. At the end of June 1976, a commando comprised of two Palestinians and RZ members Brigitte Kuhlmann and Wilfried Böse hijacked an Air France passenger jet with 257 people on board. This action was designed to win the freedom of political prisoners in German and Israeli prisons. The airplane had taken off from Tel Aviv and a large num-

ber of the passengers were Israelis. The action was designed to put pressure on the government in Jerusalem. After forcing the plane to land in Entebbe, Uganda, all non-Jewish hostages were released. On July 4, 1976, a unit of Israeli special forces stormed the plane and freed the hostages. All the commando members were killed.

Rote Zora

Within the context of the RZ, an autonomous women's organization called 'Rote Zora' developed. Although the Rote Zora followed the same fundamental concepts as the RZ, the group was also a radical feminist expression of the women's movement. But the group did not solely focus on women's issues, and the Rote Zora did carry out actions as part of RZ campaigns, for example against the NATO summit in 1982.

One of Rote Zora's most famous and successful actions came in 1987: While South Korean women workers were on strike against the textile corporation Adler, which was boosting its production due to cheap labor prices in Korea, Rote Zora supported the efforts of the striking women.

On one night in June 1987, there was a series of coordinated firebombings directed against Adler chain stores. The corporation soon gave in to the demands of the striking Korean women.

Repression Against The RZ In Germany

A movie called "Operation Entebbe" was made about the Entebbe hostage drama and the actions of the Israeli army. The RZ tried to halt showings of the film by means of firebomb attacks. After one such action in January 1977, Enno Schwall and Gerhard Albartus were arrested. Police found weapons, ammunition, fake IDs, and plans for future actions. Both men were convicted of "membership in a terrorist organization" and "attempted arson" and sentenced to a few years in prison.

Following the Rote Zora's wave of attacks against Adler, a series of house raids against 33 people were conducted all across Germany in December 1987. Ingrid Strobl and Ulla Penselin were arrested and sentenced to prison in June 1989 for supporting Rote Zora. These were the only two occasions when individuals were convicted of membership in or support for the RZ.

Changes

The RZ underwent a change of structure at the end of the 1970s. Following the Entebbe action,

which was claimed by the "International Section" of the RZ, one part of the RZ movement broke off its contacts with the Palestinian resistance. There were internal conflicts, which were discussed in the paper "Gerd Albartus Is Dead", published in December 1991: "He shared the criticisms of other comrades, with whom we had fierce discussions, to the point of a split, because of our decision to break off international contacts. He felt the reduction to our own structures was a weakness, that discussing political differences represented a split. ... For the deceptive advantage, he said, of a 'clean slate', we had brought the RZ down to the level of leftist small group militancy and abandoned all claims of guerrilla struggle."

A small number of RZ activists remained true to their original approach. Contacts with the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine), a small Palestinian resistance group, were kept up. But the RZ in Germany made a clear break with this tradition. There was no connection between the two whatsoever, neither in concept nor in logistics. In 1982, several Germans were arrested in Rome and Paris transporting explosives and weapons for the Palestinian resistance. Gerd Albartus returned to Lebanon in December 1987 and,

for reasons which are still unknown, was put on a tribunal by his own group and executed.

The Popularity Of The RZ

The popularity of the RZ among the militant left was partly due to their variety of forms of actions, with everything from forging train tickets to bombings. Another important factor was that the strategy of the RZ in the 1980s was not to kill people. When the Economics Minister for the state of Hesse, a man named Karry, died during an RZ attack protesting the construction of the Startbahn West airport runway, the group suffered a lot of criticism. There were no other deaths from RZ attacks after that.

Concept Or Organization?

The RZ were more of a concept rather than an organization. The slogan "Create Many Revolutionary Cells!" was a call to everyone to carry out RZ actions. The political orientation was towards contemporary movements, and discussions were encouraged by means of communiques and other texts. This was different from the original conception of the RZ. Initially, the RZ wanted to be an organized core, linked to movements with the aim of radicalizing them and eventually forming a guerrilla. Without ever fully abandoning this original aim, the old views were transformed. There was also unequal development within the RZ.

Mural on the Hafenstraße, Hamburg 1986. "Organize the revolutionary front."



There were some RZ, often called the Traditional RZ, which adapted the old model, then there were people who simply made use of the RZ name to carry out actions – in other words, it's almost as if there were both organized and unorganized RZs.

The RZ Concept In The 1980s

The RZ rejected the vanguardist politics of groups like the RAF.

The following is a citation from "8 Years RZ – Two Steps Forward In The Struggle For The Minds Of People, And Our Own", an RZ text published in 1981: "... We don't think it's possible to carry out attacks against central state institutions: We can't pose the question of power! We aren't waging a war! Rather, we are at the beginning of a long and difficult struggle to win the hearts and minds of people – not the first steps toward a military victory." The RZ propagated armed struggle from legality. That led state investigators to call them "weekend terrorists", but the RZ approach proved successful. Anonymous RZ members could follow the effects of their actions directly and convey them to the movement. Because RZ members were unknown, but also not living underground, they were more protected from repression. That's not the case for RAF members, for whom spending their entire lives in illegality is a precondition.

The End Of The RZ

The RZ concept can only function in correspondence with a broad movement. Without such movements, the RZ are reduced to an armed form of action, isolated and near its end. That's exactly what happened in the mid 1980s with the decline of the autonomist movement.

In 1986, the RZ began a militant campaign against deportation police and authorities with the slogan, "For Free Floods! Fight For The Right To Stay For Refugees And Immigrants!" This was a break from the new concept of the RZ. There was no broad movement in support of refugees and immigrants for the RZ to work out of, nor a broad movement within the radical left with such a focus. The RZ were trying to start such a movement themselves. In a text entitled "The End Of Our Politics" issued in January 1992, the RZ stated: "We saw possibilities in our connection to social themes and the refugee campaign for creating a new sphere of action for international solidarity in the metropoles and opening it ourselves." In January 1991, the RZ ended the campaign, and a year later a statement announcing the dissolution of the RZ movement was released. Although some attacks were still carried out in the name of the RZ, that doesn't escape the fact that the RZ concept hit a dead end in the conditions of the 1990s.

Chapter V

A fighting movement

The West German autonomist movement, or 'Autonome', came about in the early 1980s. Its social composition consists of all social classes. Students are many in number, but unschooled youths and young workers are also involved. The average age of people in the movement ranges from 18 to 28.

Emancipatory movements in the 1980s were not oriented towards the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China or any other real existing socialist state. German autonomists, therefore, did not practice a politics which was based on the old scheme of class struggle. Their resistance did not spring from the factories, nor did their struggle take place in the factories.

Autonomists reject strict forms of organization and dogmatic world views. There is no ideological or political leadership, as is the case with K-groups. Autonomist politics is based upon immediate action and change. Strict hierarchical leadership structures are seen as being in contradiction to emancipatory politics. The highest political decision making structure within the autonomist movement is the plenum — a meeting at which every person has an equal right to speak and make decisions. The autonomists are an "undogmatic" movement comprised of different tendencies.

The ideological struggle between communism and anarchism plays a minor role. The rejection of communist viewpoints and forms of organization are a result of negative experiences with the K-groups. Within the autonomist movement, there were tendencies from the beginning which dreamed of a social revolutionary movement. That's why autonomist groups participate in May Day rallies and support workers' struggles such as wildcat strikes and plant occupations. But their strategies and motivations are very different. That's why some people in the movement call for autonomist blocs at the trade unions' May Day rallies, while others organize independent demonstrations on May 1st.

Still other autonomists reject any sort of orientation towards the historical workers' movement altogether. They seek to develop a new

conception of class struggle, based on looming mass poverty and the dissolution of classical structures. As flexibility capitalist individuality take on greater importance, and the automatization of production rationalizes the need for human labor away, the situation of workers is being fundamentally changed. The results are fewer labor guarantees and less social security. Temporary workers and the unemployed, who face the exploitative conditions of capitalism, are not represented by the unions. The selforganization of this spectrum, so-called 'Jobber' initiatives, is seen as a political perspective for one segment of the autonomist spectrum.

Other tendencies in the autonomist movement think its wrong to accept any sort of wage labor conditions under capitalism. They propagate a break with social norms, to drop out of normal society. Some launch projects such as collectives or self-run businesses to allow for "self-control" over capitalist working conditions. A more common expression of this outlook is voluntary unemployment, or long-term university



May Day poster from Hamburg, 1984.



Autonomist banner at the DGB trade union May Day demonstration in Göttingen, 1985. "Not a single hour, no minute, no wage dependence. Retirement pension now."

Photo: Rainer

study, and living off of public assistance money. Such people see no perspective in joining the capitalist job market. The "stable" institutions of the family, striving for social acceptance, and a career are rejected as forced capitalist performance. The struggle liberation not only takes place on the field of political confrontation, but rather in one's entire life. For a majority of the autonomist movement, such views are only clung to during a certain phase of life. After a few years,

most return to their normal, "mainstream" ways of living. The corresponding withdrawal from political struggle and the change in perceived values marks a total break from their previous, "autonomous" existence.

The First Generation

Although the impulses for the autonomist movement came from people who were politically active in the 1970s, a majority of the 'Autonome' were youths. A majority had no previous political experience. Most autonomists became politicized and developed through participation in current struggles. That's what differentiates the potential in the early 1980s from later years. In the movement's formative years, many more activists came from the working class, and didn't bother with theory. During demonstrations, leftist gangs of rockers appeared, mainly interested in confrontations. Such groupings did not publish magazines or hand out flyers. And during the autonomist movement's first years of crisis in 1982/83, most of these groups disappeared. Women involved in autonomist circles in particular had to deal with this "street fighter mentality" and corresponding patriarchal behavior for a long time.

Militancy

Differences in political content as well as praxis are vast and varied within the autonomist movement, and any attempt to generalize about them will surely be incomplete.

One concept which does generally apply to the autonomist movement as a whole, however, is militancy. Militancy does not just mean a radical praxis. Militant politics questions the state's monopoly on violence and does not recognize state authority. Autonomists take matters into their own hands and utilize forms of protest which go well beyond what the state will allow.

In addition to militancy, anti-patriotism and anti-militarism are also important aspects of the autonomist movement. Typical of this are election boycotts and acts of sabotage. Elections are viewed as a means of legitimizing and securing the rule of those in power.

Another characteristic of the autonomist movement is anti-Americanism. The USA is viewed as the dominant and most aggressive imperialist power. America is responsible for the militarist NATO alliance and it directs the reactionary struggle against liberation movements in the Three Continents. That's why demonstrations against state visits by U.S. officials and various actions against U.S. military establishments or American cultural centers are an integral part of autonomist politics.

Geography

The autonomist movement is not limited to Germany. Independently of one another, similar movements developed in various Western European countries. These movements differed depending on the local conditions. In Italy, where the first autonomist movement arose in the late 1970s, the movement was very oriented towards the production sector. Another important theme was the struggle for squatted houses and social centers. By the time the German autonomist movement arose in the 1980s, the movement in Italy was largely a thing of the past.

In Holland, there is a very big squatters movement, the 'Kraaker'. This idea was also taken up in Germany. The Dutch movement is based in the major cities, especially Amsterdam. The same is true in Denmark, for example, where the movement is centered in Copenhagen. Squatting movements also came about in Austria and the German speaking cities of Switzerland. In other capitalist countries, although there were squats and militant confrontations in the 1980s, there was not an autonomist movement.

Two Strange Siblings

At the same time as the autonomist movement was rising, the anti-imperialists, or 'antiimps', were also on the rise. The difference between these two political tendencies was mainly determined by their relationship to the RAF. For the antiimps, RAF politics were central, but the autonomists were more critical of that line.



Although the 'Autonomen' and the 'antiimps' came from the same milieu, their scenes were very different. Both tendencies worked together, however, depending on the city and the groups involved. As the RAF declined in the 1990s, most anti-imperialist groups disbanded as well.

Autonomist Commando Militancy

Autonomist militancy is not limited to clashes with police and fascists during demonstrations. Other expressions are attacks on corporations involved in the construction of nuclear plants, for example, or the arms industry, the police and court system, state institutions, fascist centers, and reactionary politicians.

In this respect, there are similarities between autonomist commando militancy and the RZ. Activists agitate above ground and as part of a movement, which they seek to radicalize by means of their actions. Actions aimed at killing people are not carried out. Autonomist commandos agitate independently of one another. Unlike the RZ, there is no attempt at organizational continuity. Even similar names are avoided. Autonomist commandos don't carry out more than one action under the same name. The goal is not to form a guerrilla movement. Rather, the aim is sabotage and militant propaganda, a propaganda which is in conjunction with legal forms of resistance such as demonstrations. Commando militancy is a way of making direct action more mass based, not merely leading to a change in consciousness but concretely hindering projects. The aim is to create a militant fighting movement which can carry out

effective actions on its own without the need for leading cadre. Emphasis is placed on actions which have a political message and which are easily duplicated. Technical tips and political statements are published in the form of action communiques, distributed as photo copies and documented in publications from the autonomist scene. Commando militancy is a part of the movement itself, not a separate structure.

Most militant attacks carried out in Germany are done by autonomist commandos. They number in the thousands, and their range of themes goes well beyond that of the RZ.

Autonomist Women/Lesbians

In addition to the line of development of the women's movement in the 1970s, women's groups with a political base in the autonomist movement developed in the early 1980s.

Autonomist women's groups arose from the need to make women's liberation a central political theme and to focus on the political work of women.

Negative experiences with sexism inside the movement's own ranks led to many women splitting off to form gender specific groups. This allowed them to draw on the experiences of the women's movement of the 1970s, and to make use of its structures, such as women's centers, bookstores, and other projects.

Women began making women-only floors inside squatted houses, where no men were allowed, opening women's cafes, and forming women's blocs during demonstrations. They organized "women's resistance camps" and confronted mixed gender autonomist circles and their sexist structures.

There is no uniform political understanding within the autonomist women's/lesbian movement, and some groups work together with "mixed" groups, while others refuse to cooperate with men altogether. What they all have in common, however, is the view that sexism is not a secondary contradiction, and that patriarchy is a separate, historical form of oppression which is closely linked to other forms of oppression. They also share a rejection of reformist demands for women's equality inside the capitalist society, and they recognize the need for women to organize independently.

"News forms and content led to a splitting off from the general left and organizational autonomy for the women's movement. This autonomy introduced important processes, to question the value structures in the male-dominated society, not to seek a perspective in the society's power structure, not to seek One example of cooperation between autonomists and anti-imperialists was the anti-Air Base demonstration in Frankfurt, May 1982.



Poster for a Walpurgisnight women's/ lesbian demo in Göttingen, early 1980s. influence by gaining a share of power, not defining women's liberation in the terms of male roles. This led to the creation of free spaces where it was possible to escape from patriarchal structures. That was important, and it still is important, because the women's movement more than any other needs avoid identifying with its own oppressor!" (Rote Zora, "Every Heart A Time Bomb")

Autonomist women/lesbians occupied their own political fields, for example making public demonstrations on March 8th, International Women's Day. Since the end of the 1970s, what are known as 'Walpurgisnacht' demonstrations have been held on April 30th, dealing with the issue of violence against women. When the autonomist women's/lesbian movement was at its height in the 1980s, many women participated in Walpurgis Night demonstrations, which usually ended with women's festivals.

The political themes taken up by autonomist women/lesbians are often the same ones which are dealt with in "mixed" groups, although with more of a feminist outlook. Some themes were taken from the American feminist movement in the 1990s, for example the "sex-gender" debate, which sought to question the very principle of a two

gender society. Many themes were explicitly dealt with by women's groups, or were taken from them into the broader autonomist movement, the most important one being the issue of sexism is the society and within the autonomist movement itself. In many cases, this led to splits within mixed groups, for example during the preparations for the anti-IMF campaign in 1988.

The autonomist women's/lesbian movement reached its highpoint at the end of the 1980s with its critique of gene and reproductive technologies and the population policies of the imperialist states against the Three Continents.

Rote Zora carried out attacks as a part of this campaign. On February 27, 1988, Rote Zora bombed the new biology center at Berlin's Technical University shortly before it opened. In their communique, the group defined themselves as part of the international women's movement carrying out an action as a practical expression of internationalism. It was also to point the finger at basic research into the spread of information.

Ingrid Strobl and Ulla Penselin, who had published works on similar themes, were arrested during nationwide police raids in December 1987 and charged with membership in Rote Zora. A solidarity campaign for the two women was organized, and was even supported by many mainstream elements.

Fantifas

At the end of the 1980s, a movement of female anti-fascists, or 'fantifas', arose. In addition to traditional anti-fascist work, fantifas also sought to examine the role of women in fascism and in the anti-fascist resistance.

The special situation of women refugees was an important topic for many women's groups in the 1990s, including the demand for a woman refugee's individual right to stay in the country, independent of her husband.

Solidarity with the Kurdish national liberation movement and cooperation with Kurdish women's organizations also played an important role in the political direction of the autonomist women's/lesbian movement in the 1990s.

As with the autonomist movement in general, the structures of the autonomist women's/lesbian movement began to decline at the end of the 1980s and their mobilizational potential declined.

Triple Oppression

The discussion paper "Three To One: The Triple Oppression Of Racism, Sexism, And Class", published in 1990, was a result of discussions in the women's movement about the "people of

color" movement in the United States and was seen as a critique of the left. This "triple oppression" theory, which examined class oppression, patriarchy, and racisms as the foundations of social oppression, was hotly debated over the next few years. Although triple oppression theory did not postulate a new main contradiction, it did tread on new ground due to the fact that it questioned classical leftist theory and dealt with the topic of racism.

Sexism Debates

Autonomists claim to make no differentiation between politics and personal life. They strive for immediate self-liberation, and that means sometime hard confrontations about the personal conduct of individuals.

The discussion of sexism within the movement has been very important. Men within the autonomist movement have faced accusations of rape, openly named by women so as to force a discussion of sexual violence and to warn other women. Such accusations have led to fights, splits, people being thrown out of groups, and years of tension. Sometimes, women in a group have decided never to work with men again. They don't want to always have to start at the beginning again, explaining self-evident things to men and making them account for their sexist behavior. Men's groups have been formed with the goal of having men confront their own sexism and develop an anti-patriarchal position. Autonomist groups have failed when it comes to a constructive discussion of accusations of sexism. Debates about rape have led many people to abandon politics altogether.

The Squatters' Movement

At the beginning of the autonomist movement were the squatters' movement and the anti-nuclear struggle. In the late 1970s, squatting actions gave rise to the Autonomen as an independent political force. The strongholds of the movement were the 'Ruhrgebiet' in the Western part of Germany and the neighborhood of Kreuzberg in West Berlin, which developed into a symbol of the squatting movement. Near the Berlin Wall, large housing blocks had become objects of real estate speculation. Many buildings were empty, others were in poor condition. Because of its relatively low rent prices, the neighborhood of Kreuzberg was home to many students, unemployed people, and Turkish "guest worker" families.

In 1979, a wave of house occupations was carried out. The activists felt a sense of great political empowerment. Free spaces were created in the squatted houses, where people were able to

act on their ideals of social living. Squatting collectives seemed to break down the separations between politics and private life.

Important decisions were made during plenary sessions. Squat councils were formed as a way of coordinating between several houses. There were no other forms of organization. Nor was there very much debate about strategy or theory. Discussions mainly dealt with joint demonstrations and campaigns which had to do with the squats.

The state was not prepared for the wave of squatting actions. Counter measures, such as police actions to stop house occupations, were met with militant actions and demonstrations which mobilized thousands of people.

People who took part in the squatting actions and demonstrations felt as if a revolutionary movement was being formed which nothing could hold back. Indeed, the autonomist movement became much more widespread within a short period of time. In 1981, there were more than 700 squatted houses all across Germany, and autonomist groups had formed in nearly every major city.

In May 1981, the squatting movement in West Berlin reached its highpoint with 169 squatted houses. Most of the squats were located in Kreuzberg, where the movement virtually controlled entire streets.

An Election Promise Kept

Following elections in the summer of 1981, the CDU controlled Berlin's city government. During the election campaign, the christian democrats had complained about the "squatting problem" and promised to do something about it. From now on, police would immediately react to any squatting attempt. In the following weeks, houses which had been squatted for a long time were evicted. Demonstrations and clashes with the police were the result. On September 22, 1981, following the eviction of eight squats, a group of people fleeing from police were chased into traffic. An 18-year-old named Klaus-Jürgen Rattay was hit by a bus and killed. In the days that followed, there were continued attacks and clashes which resulted in millions of dollars in damage. But the evictions continued. In just a few months, 92 squats were evicted. A divide-and-conquer strategy was used against the remaining 77 squats. Houses were told to sign legal rent contracts or face eviction. This prompted endless debates within the movement, splitting those who wanted contracts from those who refused to negotiate. In the rest of Germany, the same strategy was used, resulting in similar conflicts among squatters.

"Hafenstraße – No Future For The System!" Poster for the international days of action in the winter of 1984/1985.



The Lights Go Out On A Northern Light

After 1983, there wasn't much of a squatters' movement to speak of, but squatting still remained a field of political action. Until the early 1990s, initiatives such as squatting Days of Action and house occupations were used to help revive the movement. All across Germany, there were still some big ex-squatted complexes which remained in existence at the end of the 1980s, and which were still political centers despite having legal contracts. Some of these, like Hamburg's 'Hafenstraße', retained a high degree of political symbolism.

The large buildings in the Hafenstraße, which housed as many as 150 people, were squatted off and on starting in October 1981. In November 1983, limited rent contracts lasting until 1986 were signed. During that time, there was a series of actions and demonstrations in defense of the Hafenstraße. A very diverse group of people lived in the Hafenstraße squats. Some people had no interest in politics and just wanted a cheap place to live, while others viewed the Hafenstraße as primarily a political project. These politicos were the determining faction until the end of the 1980s. In the fall of 1986, six houses in the Hafenstraße were evicted. That seemed to signal the beginning of the end for the project. Activists mobilized for a "Nationwide Squatters' Demo" on December 20, 1986. During this mass demonstration, riot police tried to attack the soundcar, which was guarded by people in masks and helmets and wielding clubs. Images of these clashes were broadcast all across Germany, and the Hafenstraße became a nationwide topic. In the summer of 1987, the evicted houses were squatted again, leading to an escalation with authorities in November 1987. The squatters mobilized supporters from other cities, the houses were prepared for defense, and high barricades were built in the streets. It looked as though it was going to come down to one final battle. Actions in solidarity with the Hafenstraße were carried out all across Germany. In Hamburg, however, people weren't just gearing up for a fight, rather new rental contracts were also being prepared for the houses. But the authorities demanded that the squatters take down their barricades themselves before talks could begin. After the Mayor of Hamburg gave his word that there would be contract negotiations, the squatters and local residents began dismantling the defenses in the Hafenstraße on November 19. There was no battle, and the Hafenstraße achieved its political goal. But this success did not last long. Conflicts between the politicos and the non-political squatters led to many activists pulling out of the project. After 1989, the Hafenstraße no longer existed as a political association. That was the end of Germany's last nationally relevant project from the old squatters' movement.

A new squatters' movement arose in 1989/1990 in the former East Germany, shortly before it was annexed, and this movement exhibited a lot of similarities to the movement in the early 1980s. But this movement was soon brought under control by the West German

authorities. Through a combination of evictions and limited rent contracts, the movement reached its peak in 1990/1991. Most famous, of course, were the days of rioting around the Mainzer Strasse in East Berlin in November 1990.

The Anti-Nuclear Movement

In the mid 1970s, a broad resistance movement against the construction of nuclear power plants arose. The movement was comprised of activists of different ages who came from a variety of backgrounds and classes. The SPD and DKP were only minimally involved in this movement. As an establishment party, the SPD represented the atomic energy program to a great degree, and although the DKP opposed nuclear power plants in the capitalist West, they defended those facilities which had been constructed in the socialist states. The only radical left forces in the anti-nuclear movement were the K-groups and undogmatic circles from the Sponti scene, although the K-groups were clearly dominant.

In the first phase of the movement, the occupation of construction sites was the primary means of opposing the facilities. In the town of Wyhl, the site occupation was actually successful in preventing the construction of a nuclear facility there. In 1975, the site at Wyhl was occupied during a mass demonstration. The occupation was able to delay work on the project until a court decision put off the construction of the plant indefinitely.

The success at Wyhl became the model for the anti-nuclear movement. Clashes with police, who sought to clear out occupied sites or prevent them from being occupied, were the images which defined the movement. Two names became synonymous with the anti-nuclear movement in the 1970s.

The construction site at Brokdorf outside of Hamburg was occupied following a mass rally on October 30, 1976. Police evicted the site that same evening. Following this police action, a second nationwide demonstration was organized for November 13, 1976 and a third one on February 19, 1977. More than 20,000 people took part in both of these demos. Hundreds of people tried to break though the metal fences and water-filled canals which now surrounded the Brokdorf site. The militant clashes at Brokdorf became a symbol of anti-nuclear resistance. The K-groups played an important role during these confrontations.

The highpoint of the anti-nuclear movement came during a nationwide demonstration on March 19, 1977, when 20,000 people marched against the nuclear facility in Grohnde near

Hameln (between Göttingen and Hannover). The KBW, KB, and some "undogmatic" groups prepared to storm the construction site. Blocs of people marched in the demo, outfitted with metal pipes, helmets, tools, grappling hooks, and blowtorches. The aim was to saw off portions of the massive security fences. Huge numbers of police reserves beat the activists back from the barriers. Riot police on horseback were also deployed.

After the mass demonstration in Grohnde, German authorities sought to ban the KBW, KPD, and the KPD/ML. Because the KB was not a party, it was not mentioned in the case, but legal measures were taken against it as well. That same year, when a nationwide demonstration was organized against the fast breeder reactor in Kalkar on September 24, 1977, the police were ready. The demo was also taking place in the context of the RAF's September 5 kidnapping of Hanns-Martin Schleyer. Police were searching everywhere for clues, and the leftist scene was facing heavy repression. The nigh before September 24, police set up roadblocks all across Germany. Around 20,000 people were arrested before the demonstration even started. Despite this, 50,000 antinuclear activists still managed to rally at the site in Kalkar. But the creeping police state methods had a profound effect on many people.

It's impossible to deny that the anti-nuclear movement did have some success. From 1977 to 1981, no new nuclear facilities were approved for construction, none started their operations, and no existing plants were expanded. The struggle against nuclear energy and the atomic state became an important political issue. Although the K-groups started to decline by 1979, a number of militant groups arose due to their engagement in the anti-nuclear struggle. The movement was comprised of a variety of people. Many could

Attempted site occupation at the nuclear power plant in Grohnde on March 19, 1977...





...and one segment of perimeter barrier gets torn down... already look back on years of political activity, while others first became politicized in the antinuclear movement. Many of the latter went on to comprise the ranks of the autonomist movement.

Wendland Takes Center Stage

The plan to build a nuclear waste storage facility in the Wendland region in 1979 became the focal point of the anti-nuclear movement. On March 31 of that year, a demonstration in Hannover with around 100,000 people became the largest antinuclear protest ever in Germany at that time.

On May 3, 1980, a demo of 5,000 people marched to Gorleben, where the nuclear waste facility was to be built. Activists proclaimed a "Free Republic of Wendland" and 1,000 anti-nuclear activists began to construct an anti-nuclear village. Over the next few weeks, 110 huts were built, along with a makeshift church and two large wooden towers. This village, mainly home to people who believed in non-violence, soon became famous all across Germany. After 33 days, the village was evicted by riot police. The 1,000 activists who were there offered no resistance to the police, and there were no clashes.

...resulting in clashes between demonstrators and riot cops on horseback.



In 1981, the court order halting construction on the nuclear facility in Brokdorf was dropped. On February 28, 1981, an international demonstration was organized to protest the renewed construction. Around 100,000 people took part in this demo. Attempts to pull down a security fence were quickly halted by police. In the fall of 1982, there were other mass actions against nuclear power plants which resulted in militant clashes between autonomists and police: on September 4, 1982, in Gorleben, on October 2 in Kalkar, and on October 20 at the closed down pit 'Schacht Konrad' facility near Salzgitter.

'Tag X'

The starting point for a new wave of protests in Wendland came in the night of April 23, 1984. During this night, the group Autonomist Revolutionary Action toppled a powerline right next to the Brokdorf nuclear facility. On April 30, around 3,000 people tried to blockade Wendland on 'Tag X', Day X, the day when atomic waste was due to be transported to the storage site in Gorleben. Around this time, posters calling for resistance on 'Tag X' were posted up all across Germany. The day became a reality on October 8-9, 1984. But police were prepared, as 2,000 cops used force to push the convoy of trucks carrying spent atomic fuel into Gorleben.

The Criminalization Of The 'Tag X' Posters

The criminalization of the 'Tag X' posters began in the Lüchow-Dannenberg region. On June 15, 1984, police filed charges under Paragraphs 303 and 304 (suspected vandalism) of the Criminal Code. The reason for these charges was a poster hung up on a traffic sign. After more posters were seized, a court in Dannenberg ruled on June 29, 1984 that the 'Tag X' posters were punishable under Paragraph 111 of the Criminal Code.

On July 12, 1984, police investigations in Göttingen were launched against the 'Tag X' posters. In Duderstadt, two people were stopped at a police checkpoint and 50 posters were confiscated. Next was Bamberg, where four people were arrested while hanging up 'Tag X' posters. The state court in Bamberg started proceedings under Paragraph 111 and Paragraph 315b (endangering public traffic). The state prosecutor in Göttingen was contacted as well, since the printer's name 'AktivDruck' Göttingen appeared on the poster.

Because of the posters which were confiscated in Göttingen and elsewhere in Germany, a trial was started on August 3, 1984 against two alleged members of 'AktivDruck'. They faced charges

under federal laws 111 and 315, as well as Paragraphs 8 and 20 of Lower Saxony's state press laws. Also at this time, two alleged editors of 'Atom-Express', a publication of the anti-nuclear resistance movement, faced charges. On August 28, the home of a member of the 'AktivDruck' printing collective was raided, as was a printing press and the offices of the local Working Group Against Atomic Energy. In the printing press, police found 3,000 'Tag X' posters as well as the printing plate itself. Police investigators also looked for evidence that issue number 40 of 'Atom-Express' had been printed there.

Except for letting the police get their hands on a great deal of information, the trial against 'AktivDruck' went nowhere and the charges were eventually dropped.

1986 And The End

Due to the strong resistance movement in Wendland against the nuclear storage facility in Gorleben, a plan to build an accompanying nuclear power plant in nearby Dragahn was abandoned. Instead, the federal government and the atomic energy corporation DWK decided in 1985 to build a new facility in Wackersdorf in Bavaria. Resistance soon began here as well. After construction work was started on December 14, 1985, 40,000 people held a mass rally, after which the building site was occupied. Two days later, police moved in and cleared the site. On December 21, the site as occupied again and a hut village was constructed.

On January 7, 1986, police again cleared the building site and surrounded it with guarded fences. This fence became a permanent target of activists during so-called "Sunday strolls" around the site, which often resulted in clashes with police. During the panic of a police attack on Sunday stroll demonstrators on March 3, 1986, an elderly woman named Erna Sielka died of a heart attack.

On March 31, 1986, police fired CS gas into crowds of people following a rally by 100,000 people at the site. Alois Sonnleitner suffered an asthma attack from the police tear gas and died. In response to this, demonstrations, actions, and attacks took place in cities all across Germany.

Chernobyl

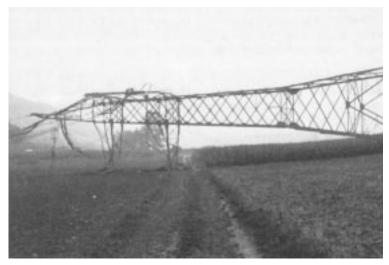
On April 26, 1986, an accident took place at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Soviet Union. This accident led to a broad inflammation of the anti-nuclear movement. Mass demonstrations and actions were held all over Germany. The anti-nuclear movement became a mass movement almost over night.

This spontaneous development was accompanied by a wave of attacks. Toppling power lines became a common form of action, including sawing down towers transporting power from nuclear facilities.

It was against this background that the conflicts around Wackersdorf escalated in the spring of 1986.

Pentecost 1986

On the evening of May 17, 1986, around 15,000 people came together at an anti-nuclear camp organized during the Pentecostal religious holiday. That evening there were clashes at the Wackersdorf site, and the fence was breached at several points. Police fired watercannons and tear gas all night long. But attacks on the site continued. The next day, police special forces stationed outside the perimeter were forced to retreat into the building site and police vehicles went up in flames. The clashes reached their highpoint that night, when activists tried to ram the fences with a bulldozer. Police finally had to fire CS gas from helicopters to drive back the crowds.



The police were determined to learn their lessons from the clashes at Wackersdorf. Riot police were henceforth equipped with rubber bullets, and new special units called USK were deployed. Anti-nuclear actions in Wackersdorf and elsewhere were met with heavy repression. The Autonomen were not able to respond in kind. What's more, public outrage after the Chernobyl accident began to wane. What happened on June 7, 1986 showed just how quickly things had changed. It was on this day that the Brokdorf nuclear power plant went into operation. Two nationwide demonstrations were called, one in Wackersdorf and one in Brokdorf. At both locations, the police were in total control. Despite massive hindrances, 10,000 people demonstrated

A nuclear plant's power line tower toppled by militants, 1986.



in Brokdorf and 30,000 in Wackersdorf.

Police had the upper hand during clashes at both demonstrations. The number of participants and degree of clashes revealed that the anti-nuclear movement was in decline. In January 1988, the State Supreme Court in Munich ruled the Wackersdorf construction illegal. The German corporation decided to cooperate with the French firm COGEMA and moved its operations to La Hague. In April 1989, the Wackersdorf project was abandoned.

Sticker and poster from the resistance to Wackersdorf, 1986. The barrier fencing forms a swastika in the design.

Castor Transports

After 1987, things were quiet in the anti-nuclear resistance. It wasn't until the transportation of spent nuclear fuel rods, known as 'Castor' transports, to the Gorleben storage facility in 1994 that the resistance movement sprung to life again. Because the transports were to be moved by train, many demonstrations and resistance actions took place on or alongside railway lines.

A widespread form of sabotage involved grappling hooks called 'Hakenkrallen' which could be tossed over rail power lines to bring a halt to train transportation. Because such actions were carried out all across Germany, police were powerless to stop them. It would be impossible to



The Tag-X poster was used during various mobilizations against the 'Castor' nuclear waste shipments in the 1990s. This is the original version.

guard every inch of Germany's railways day and night. In the Wendland region itself, the resistance movement had become anchored in the local population over the years. Autonomist groups were in action as well once the Castor transports got underway. The number of people taking part in demonstrations, and the level of radicalism, gradually increased. The third and final Castor transport, for the time being anyway, was completed in March 1997, but only after police fought back the resistance of more than 10,000 people.

The Startbahn Movement

In 1964, plans were announced to expand the airport in Frankfurt. At the center of this project would be a new runway, 'Startbahn 18 West'. Residents organized in opposition to this plan in April 1965. Until 1980, this citizens' initiative took mainly legal steps to stop the new runway construction. The first major demonstration was in 1979. The leftist scene in Frankfurt, Mainz, and Wiesbaden also took up the 'Startbahn' issue. In October 1980, the first phase of work on the new runway began.

In November 1980, a protest hut village was constructed on the land which was slated to be used for the new runway. The resistance to the airport expansion showed similar strengths as the anti-nuclear movement. The masses of participants were local residents, concerned about increased noise and the destruction of local forests. Ecology was their primary concern. Then there were the K-groups and the Spontis, who saw the Startbahn project primarily as a military project of the U.S. Air Force.

The hut village gave a great boost to the Startbahn movement and the resistance became more broad. In 1981, people began calling for a referendum in the state of Hesse on the issue. Activists gathered the necessary 120,000 signatures in May. But despite these efforts, the hut village was evicted on November 2, 1981. There were brutal attacks by police on activists, who then resisted against the police. After the site was cleared, police tried to build a cement wall around the construction site.

Activists responded with a second hut village, which was soon evicted, so they built a third one. Actions were carried out not only at the building site, but also in the cities of Frankfurt and Wiesbaden. On November 14, a demo by 150,000 people in Wiesbaden handed over a petition with 220,000 signatures calling for a referendum. In January 1982, Hesse's state court rejected the call for a referendum on Startbahn West.

Continuing Clashes

There were continuing clashes with police at the Startbahn construction site. In November 1981, anti-Startbahn activists attempted to blockade the Frankfurt Airport. Activists also blockaded the highway leading up to it.

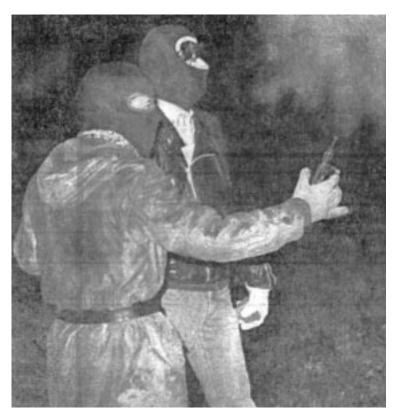
As the second phase of construction work on the runway got underway, a nationwide demonstration was announced on January 26, 1982, with the aim of occupying the site. On January 30, around 40,000 people took part in this demonstration. Police baton charges and tear gas prevented the site occupation attempt, but there were hours of clashes with the police. This demonstration, together with the eviction of the fourth hut village, seemed to show that this type of mobilization and form of action had reached its limits.

Starting in February 1982, regular Sunday strolls were organized. A broad spectrum from local residents to militant autonomists joined together in these marches and walked alongside the perimeter walls at the Startbahn site. During these strolls, actions were regularly carried out against the perimeter barriers.

On April 12, 1984, after 18 years of protest and resistance, Startbahn West went into operation. One last time, a nationwide demonstration was called, and 10,000 people took part. There were attacks on the perimeter walls and clashes with police.

Despite the opening of Startbahn West, the weekly Sunday strolls continued until 1987, as did other demonstrations. The struggle against Startbahn West remained part of the resistance movement in West Germany. Although the number of activists steadily declined, making things easier for the police, actions were still carried out.

After a nighttime demonstration on the anniversary of the hut village eviction on November 2, 1987, the anti-Startbahn West movement came to an end: An activist from the autonomist scene took a pistol to this demonstration which had been taken from a cop during an earlier demo. As riot police charged against demonstrators on the night of November 2, this person opened fire on police lines. Two cops were killed. The police apparatus responded by going through all of its collected data on the movement and launched a massive wave of house raids and arrests. There was a lot of controversy after this, and many Startbahn activists lost solidarity with one another. These conflicts led to a collapse of the Startbahn movement within a short period of time.



The Criminalization Of The "Startbahn Lions"

During the confrontations surrounding Startbahn West and the associated brutal police attacks, the so-called "Hessian lions" or "Startbahn lions" appeared. The concrete impetus for these works of art was the series of police attacks in November 1981, in particular the brutal police attack on an anti-Startbahn demo in the Rohrbachstraße in Frankfurt on November 3, 1981. At first the "Startbahn lions" were relatively unknown, but that changed after the criminalization began. At first, legal steps against the alleged makers of the emblems failed. Charges were dropped against two people on March 23, 1982, after a judge ruled the following: "Political criticism, no matter how harsh or incorrect, does not constitute a crime under Paragraph 90 of the Criminal Code. ... The accused presented Hesse's coat of arms in a certain form to protest police deployments in conjunction with demonstrations against the construction of Startbahn 18 West, which they deemed unjust and brutal. ... But it cannot be determined that their act represents a mean spirited attack on Hesse or a insult to its coat of arms."

But police continued to detain people for wearing the emblem, either as patches on jackets or as stickers, despite having no legal basis to do so. It wasn't until a Frankfurt court's decision on November 2, 1982 that all legal uncertainty surrounding the "Startbahn lions" was removed and all forms of the design were ordered confiscated.

Startbahn West opponents fire signal flares at police. Newspaper photo, November 4, 1984.

HESSEN

wissome

There were different versions of the Hessian Lions design. The bottom one shown here is a citation of the SPD's election slogan ("Hesse first!") with the "Startbahn walls" in the background.

More Than One Thousand Court Cases

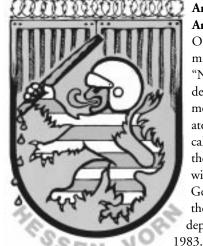
The small, 7x10 cm emblem broke all the records for criminalization. By June 1984, more than 1,000 court cases had been opened. But these trials weren't just a form of criminalization, rather they represented the loss of certain constitutionally guaranteed freedoms.

Although most of the cases were settled with a small fine or simply dismissed, some people refused to bow down and accept any limitations on their freedom of expression and the freedom of art.

For example: On November 28, 1982, hundreds of anti-Startbahn activists demonstrated near the construction site with Startbahn lion emblems on their clothes.

40 people were later tried in a court in Russelsheim for insulting the state of Hesse's coat of arms. Around 30 people had their charges dropped after a statement by a learned judge ("From our experiences in the Nazi period, we learned: Resist from the beginning!") and after admitting to minor guilt; 9 others refused to make a deal and were convicted.

Anti-Militarism And The Anti-War Movement



On December 12, 1979, a NATO minister's conference passed the "NATO Double Decision". This decision had to do with the modernization and stationing of atomic weapons in Europe. In order to calm public opinion, the stationing of the weapons was to be accompanied with arms reduction talks. The German government fully supported the plan, and the weapons were deployed on German soil in the fall of 83.

The NATO Double Decision was the impetus for a new peace movement. This movement drew on themes from several spheres of resistance. The still-existing old peace movement tried to become part of the new movement by means of its Easter Marches and other actions. The struggle against atomic weapons was also tied in, of course, with the anti-nuclear energy movement. Solidarity with the liberation struggles on the Three Continents was tied to the struggle against U.S. imperialism and Germany's arms dealings. Anti-fascism was also traditionally linked with the peace movement.

The majority of the people in the peace movement felt personally threatened by nuclear armament. The USA, by means of NATO, was fueling the arms race, seemingly pushing the world to the brink of a Third World War. Wide sectors of the population were frightened by the thought of annihilation in a nuclear war. Demonstrations and actions like non-violent blockades against military transports were the usual means of this mass movement. But there was also a militant anti-war movement, which was how the radical forces from the autonomist and antiimperialist scenes defined themselves. As elements in the peace movement sought vehemently to disassociate themselves from "violence", deeps rifts were created between the two tendencies.

Drum Beats In Bremen

Whereas in some countries military parades are a normal thing, one of the characteristics of the Federal Republic of Germany is that the 'Bundeswehr' does not make such public appearances. Ceremonies to swear in new recruits are usually held inside the barracks. In 1980, the Germany army celebrated its 25th anniversary. For this reason, all swearing in ceremonies for new recruits were to be held in public. That resulted in massive protests. The peace movement organized protest rallies all across the country. On June 6, prominent politicians from Bonn attended a public swearing in ceremony at the Weser Stadium in the city of Bremen. That day saw the heaviest rioting which northern Germany had ever seen. Army vehicles went up in flames, and some militants made it close to the gates of the stadium itself. The actions on June 6, 1981 in Bremen became symbolic for the anti-war movement. Late that year, similar attempts were made to disrupt recruitment ceremonies. In November, there were massive militant actions in Hannover. That fall, there were also the first ever actions directed against the annual NATO military exercises.

The New Peace Groups

The rise of autonomist peace groups only had a limited connected to the autonomist movement. As with the anti-nuclear movement, it was ideological independence which characterized the autonomist groups. At the end of 1981, the autonomist wing of the peace movement networked itself by means of a project known as the National Congress of Autonomous Peace Initiatives (BAF). In 1982, the BAF numbered 700 regional groups. The groups which comprised the BAF were in solidarity with liberation movements in the Three Continents and

organized actions against arms corporations, munitions transports, and NATO manoeuvres. Nationwide, the BAF mobilized against the International Defense Electronic Exhibition (IDEE), an exhibition which took place from May 18-20, 1982 in Hannover. On May 15, 40,000 people took part in a demonstration against the IDEE exhibition. There were some clashes with the police. The highpoint of the peace movement came during the demonstrations against the NATO summit in Bonn on June 10, 1982. Nearly a half a million people protested in the German capital against the policies of NATO.

Haig, Reagan, Bush

There were three demonstrations in the 1980s which symbolized the militant anti-imperialist struggle against NATO.

On September 13, 1981, U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig visited West Berlin. A broad spectrum of peace initiatives, from the Alternative List to the autonomist scene, mobilized for a demonstration to protest Haig's visit. Following the closing rally at the Winterfeldplatz, autonomists marched on the city hall in the Schoneberg district where Haig was visiting. There were hours of clashes with the police. Images of the riots were broadcast all across Europe and in the USA. The idea behind Haig's visit was to show the world public the mutual understanding between German and U.S. politics as the jubilant masses cheered in Berlin. That idea failed. The anti-Haig demonstration also formed part of the political continuation of the demonstrations against public military recruitment ceremonies.

In conjunction with the NATO summit in Bonn, U.S. President Ronald Reagan visited West Berlin on June 11, 1982. This brought to mind the triumphant images of President Kennedy's warm reception back in 1963. But a happy celebration of the policies of the ruling powers did not take place in 1982. The state implemented extensive security measures, and a demonstration called for by the Alternative List as well as autonomist and antiimperialist groups was banned. Despite this ban, around 5,000 people tried to gather on the Nollendorfplatz, but they were surrounded by riot cops. The riots that followed were the most serious ever in West Berlin. Despite being hemmed in, the demonstrators were able to break through police lines. Images of fleeing riot police and burning police cars were seen around the world. But those who were arrested on June 11 had to pay a heavy price. In once case, a person was sentenced to 5 1/2 years in prison for throwing a stone. On June 25, 1983, U.S. Vice President George Bush joined the

German Chancellor and Germany's ceremonial President in a pompous German-American friendship celebration. Due to the planned stationing of U.S. cruise missiles and other nuclear missiles in Germany in the fall of that year, the event took on a great deal of political significance. The peace movement and the anti-war movement called for demonstrations in the city of Krefeld. Before the mobilizations got underway, there was a split over the "violence" question, resulting in two separate

actions. The demo by autonomists and antiimperialists was attacked by police after just 20 minutes. Of the 134 people arrested, some were later sentenced to prison terms. By pure chance, the Vice President's motorcade was hit with a few stones. Following the demonstration in Krefeld, there were no other similar actions by the autonomist/anti-imperialist scene against NATO policies.

The End Of The Peace Movement

In 1983, the media began speaking of a "hot autumn", meaning the planned actions by the peace movement that fall. These actions were dogmatically pacifist and their non-violent blockades outside of U.S. bases received a great deal of attention. But once the American missiles were stationed, the peace movement collapsed. In 1984, the BAF changed its name to the Federal Conference of Independent Peace Groups (BUF). The coalition's major action was a planned disruption of the annual NATO exercises. Peace camps were organized in Fulda and Hildesheim. From there, the disruption activities were to be planned. But the military to decided to call off its NATO training in Lower Saxony during the antimilitarist days of action. This resulted in the peace mobilization taking place in a vacuum. But a few thousand people took part anyway, blocking military convoys with their vehicles wherever possible. The BUF also played a role in the mobilization against the IMF summit in Bonn in May 1985. The highpoint of this action was a demonstration by more than 10,000 people. After this, the rest of peace movement faded away.

From Bremen came a call to mobilize against arms transports by American ships in the harbor in Bremen and other weapons shipments coming by



Prior to the visit by U.S. President Reagan to West Berlin, all slogans against the President were banned. Police were deployed with chemicals and paint to remove all posters and slogans in the city before the visit. Thousands of stickers with different motifs were created.



Anti-Reagan demonstration in West Berlin, June 11, 1982.

train. More than 90 local initiatives sprung up, coordinated into the Committee Against Bomb Transports (KgB). In June 1984, a munitions transport in Nordenham was blocked, and other shipments were disrupted by anti-militarist demonstrations on train tracks. In June 1985, the KgB called for a mass blockade action in Wesermarch. The shipments were then diverted to U.S. troops by other routes. That took away the KgB's political target, and the coalition soon dissolved.

Despite all the efforts which were made, the peace movement could not be radicalized. It remained an "anti-missile" movement which disappeared once the missiles were in place.

In reaction to the Gulf War in early 1991, a broad anti-war movement arose to protest U.S. intervention in the Gulf after Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. But this was a brief effort. When the short war came to end, so did the short protest movement.

Poster against the Census, 1983.



The Fight Against The Surveillance State

Decades ago, George Orwell's novel "1984" and Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World" depicted a new form of fascism in a high-tech world under total state control. Some of the science fiction technologies described by these authors, such as mass manipulation by means of television and engineering, became reality in the vears after the Second World War. Capitalist ideals of progress, media manipulation,

and data collection by the police became much discussed political themes in the 1960s. The leftist scene in particular was critical of the mediacontrolled surveillance state and legal restrictions on fundamental freedoms. The Emergency Laws were the first decisive step in this direction. In later years, laws regulating public demonstrations were tightened, whereas police were granted more and more powers.

In the 1980s, computer technology led to more changes which helped perfect the possibilities for surveillance and manipulation. Terms like "see-through people", "the surveillance state", and "computerization" came into use. Some parts of the resistance movement took on the issues of genetic engineering and biotechnology. With the introduction of cable television and telephone cards, the expansion of total state control was seen. There were several attacks on the corporations responsible for such projects.

The Census, 1983/87

The national census taking in 1983 and 1987 made the issue of state surveillance a broad political field. There was a great deal of propaganda against the 1983 census, much of it based on Orwell's "1984". Mistrust among much of the population made it seem as though resistance was possible. But the issue was temporarily shelved when Germany's Constitution Court ruled the census in its current form unconstitutional.

So the census was delayed until 1987 and better prepared. Before the census, a perfectly orchestrated PR campaign was carried out by the state. The date for the census was set for May 25, 1987, but there was still clear opposition to the census among the public.

The Greens called for a boycott, and leftradical and autonomist circles propagated acts of sabotage against the census.

All across Germany, Census Boycott, or 'Vobo', initiatives were organized, in which radical and more moderate census opponents worked together. All individuals and institutions which publicly called for a boycott of the census could face prosecution. Many Vobo offices, bookshops, newspaper offices, and private homes were raided by police. There were a variety of actions and demonstrations against the census, including militant attacks such as the firebombing of census offices or beating up census takers. But the Vobo movement had no success. Shortly after the census started, it was clear that only a small segment of the population were going to boycott it. The Vobo initiatives soon disbanded.

Groups from the autonomist movement tried to organize an "Orwell Year" in 1984 against computer technology, surveillance, and data and cable policies. In particular, the introduction of new, computer barcoded personal ID cards became an important issue. Discussions about state surveillance continued, but they didn't go anywhere. By mid year, the efforts had been largely abandoned.

The Criminalization Of A Poster

In the cities of Offenbach, Frankfurt, and Munich, copies of a flyer from a group called Against The Current entitled "Fight The Census '87!" were confiscated by police. Pictured on the flyer were images of the eagle, Germany's national symbol, from both the Nazi and the post-war era, linked arm in arm with their tongues tied together. The person legally responsible for it being published was arrested; many homes were searched. The flyer was ordered confiscated under Paragraphs 86 and 86a of the Criminal Code (display of an unconstitutional symbol, a swastika). Later, the criminalization was pursued under Paragraph 90 (insulting the state and its symbols).

In April 1990, the defendant was acquitted by a court in Frankfurt. In its ruling, the court cited a March 7, 1990 ruling by the Constitutional Court, which basically said that anything which is open to interpretation can be called art. "If the trial had been six weeks ago, before the Constitutional Court's ruling, then the verdict may have been very different', chief judge Bernhard Scheider admitted." (Frankfurter Rundschau, April 6, 1990)

Cold Ashes Blowing In The Wind

In 1986, Chernobyl and the struggle against the nuclear facility in Wackersdorf led to a rise in the militant mass movement, but in 1987, things receded once again. The same old problems which led to stagnation in the autonomist movement in the years from 1982 to 1985 were back once again, namely a lack of lasting structures, no continuity in the struggle, and a standstill in political developments. Autonomist discussions and texts now dealt primarily with internal problems and the unresolved question of political perspective. Single issue movements which had once been strong, like the squatters' struggle and the anti-war movement, faded away in 1987. Even the antinuclear movement was on the way out, since the days of major actions at construction sites were gone. Resistance actions were now mainly focused on transports of nuclear waste to the storage facility in Gorleben. The initiatives against the

census barely found any resonance outside of "the scene" and remained ineffective. The bursts of militancy surrounding May Day in West Berlin did not represent a political concept. The actions just one month later against Reagan's second visit to the city showed that the police were now in control in West Berlin.

No new fields of politics came into view, and no new concepts were developed. The anti-imperialist scene tried to get an "Intifada" campaign going in 1987. In the Near East at that time, the PLO proclaimed a popular uprising by the Palestinian people, the 'Intifada', both in Israel and the Occupied Territories. Leftist Palestinian groups organized joint events with the antiimp scene. During this campaign, the struggle against Zionism and the call to boycott Israeli goods were central themes. Large sectors of the autonomist scene took up this campaign as well. But as the Intifada waned, so did the solidarity campaign in early 1989.

Many activists sought a way out of this political stagnation by orienting themselves towards socialrevolutionary politics. A result of these discussions was the decision to make a campaign against the IMF and World Bank summit meeting in West Berlin 1988. Autonomists mobilized nationwide for a series of actions that September. During preparations for the anti-IMF campaign, several contradictions heated up within the autonomist scene. Men and women split over the question of patriarchy. But despite splits among the organizers, there was still a joint Counter Congress and a nationwide demonstration in Berlin on September 25, 1988. This demo, attended by about 10,000 people and

accompanied by a series of militant actions, was deemed a success. A similar mobilization was made against the IMF summit in Munich in 1992. There, over 10,000 people marched under the slogan "500 Years Of Colonialism Are Enough – Against The Ruling World Order!" in the anti-IMF demo on July 4, 1992.

Many groups hoped that such initiatives would give rise to a new internationalism. Solidarity with the liberation movements in the Three Continents, especially in South Africa, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Sticker against the Census, 1987.

The criminalized poster against the Census, 1987.



The JuZI in Göttingen. Banner in solidarity with the Intifada, September 1988.



and Palestine, played a big role within the autonomist movement. But no lasting political effects developed.

Kill A Multi

In 1989, the movement in Germany took up the militant campaign from Holland against the Shell corporation's support for the apartheid system in South Africa. Under the motto "Kill A Multi", actions and attacks on Shell gas stations were carried out until mid 1990. But in 1990, fundamental political changes began to come to South Africa. A few years later, apartheid was abolished. The revolution in Nicaragua had been a very important issue for leftists in Germany since the early 1980s. After the military victory by Sandinista rebels, a many sided campaign of support was developed, including volunteer labor brigades which went to help in the reconstruction of the country. But by the mid 1980s, many activists had become disappointed. Instead of a lasting revolutionary process, capitalism gained more and more influence in Nicaragua. The defeat of the Sandinistas in the spring 1990 elections marked the final end of this development for many solidarity groups. These groups viewed the revolution in Nicaragua, and their own politics, as a failure. At the same time, solidarity campaigns for El Salvador were organized under the motto "Weapons For El Salvador!". A major guerrilla offensive in November 1989 gave a boost to this campaign. But the revolutionary forces could not achieve a victory in El Salvador, and the situation

remained at a stand still. With the signing of a ceasefire agreement between the government and the rebels, and the transformation of the guerrilla into a legal political party in 1991, the solidarity movement collapsed. What had been the strongest solidarity movement in Germany dissolved itself. In the 1990s, there have been no significant examples of concrete internationalism, except support for the Kurdish PKK. The DKP spectrum has continued to push its campaign of solidarity work for Cuba, however.

SHELL RAUS AUS SÜDAFRIKAI
MATERIALIEN ZUM SHELL- BOYKOTT

KILL A MULTI

Brochure with the motif of the anti-Shell campaign, 1989.

Chapter VI

Autonomist Anti-Fascism

There has never been a broad anti-fascist movement, or even an anti-fascist consciousness, in Germany. Wide sectors of the society simply deny or ignore the fact that the crimes of the Nazi era ever took place, because many were themselves a part of it. In the propaganda of the Cold War, anti-fascism was equated with communism. The theory of totalitarianism also plays a significant role in this by seeking of define communism and fascism as essentially two variants of the same system.

The history and political content of the antifascist movement have largely been ignored or defamed. Anti-fascist work was limited to a handful of various political groups and was aimed at them. Its political effects could only develop through the cooperation of various tendencies and individuals.

In the 1970s, anti-fascist initiatives and working groups came into existence to combat the rise of fascist organizations. These anti-fascist groups were comprised of a variety of people, from christians to social democrats, youth center activists to communists, all political tendencies

were represented. What united these people was their active opposition to fascists. There was no discussion of what people meant by the term "fascism", nor how best to oppose Nazi groups. For concrete work, it was more important to simply get as many people as possible to anti-fascist mobilizations.

In the early 1980s, autonomist groups developed from this spectrum. In contrast to other sectors of the autonomist movement, the autonomist anti-fascist movement was not based on a broad mass movement. Many autonomists did not even take up anti-fascism as a field of resistance until the mid 1980s.

Traditional Anti-Fascism

The traditional anti-fascist organization in Germany is the VVN, which was founded in 1947. The VVN was an initiative of former communist resistance fighters. The goal was to form an organization for all resistance fighters and victims of the Nazi regime to keep alive the memory of the Nazi era and the resistance to it. This was not simply to take care of the political past. The VVN



Wall painting in Aachen in the early 1980s. "Death is a master from Germany...Never again fascism". Later painted over by city officials.

Pin of the VVN from the 1940s. The red triangle, the marking of political prisoners in the concentration camps, became the symbol of the VVN.



honors the notion of the united front and mobilizes against both old and new Nazis, and the group also has taken a stand against NATO policies and the sharpening of Germany's asylum laws, for example. "The unity of democrats, the unity of working peoples, are the pillars of a successful struggle against fascism. In this struggle, social democrats, communists, christians, and independents can and must work together." (Orientation and Action Program of the VVN/BdA, adopted in May 1979)

After a few years, the VVN became open for the younger generation, as the addition of the title Union of Anti-Fascists (BdA) to the name suggests. The political course of the VVN is directed by the DKP. Therefore, the VVN follows a very legalistic approach and views itself as a defender of Germany's Constitution. "Today, antifascist politics means defending the anti-fascist positions of the federal and state we commentate Constitutions in a time of a massive restrictions on democratic freedoms." (VVN Program, May 1979)

Militant or armed actions were wholly rejected by the VVN. "The despicable deeds of terrorist groups are used as an excuse to take away our civil rights." (VVN Program, May 1979) Except for some regional ties, the VVN did not work together with K-groups or autonomists. But the VVN/BdA did receive a lot of support from the East German SED, enabling the group to build up an extensive organizational apparatus. With the collapse of the DDR in 1989, the VVN/BdA collapsed organizationally as well. But despite the loss of many members and great structural changes, the organization continues to exist. The communist influence over the VVN/BdA has declined in recent years and given way to a more social democratic and mainstream orientation.

Emblem of the "Rock Against The Right" initiative.

The Antifa Politics Of The K-Groups

For the K-groups, anti-fascist struggle was of secondary importance. But appearances by neo-Nazis were met with great determination. In contrast to the VVN, K-groups did not fall

> back upon the state's monopoly on violence. Militancy was considered

normal praxis against neo-Nazis.

The only K-group which attempted to develop continuing anti-fascist work was the KB, which established antifa commissions. These commissions did research on neo-Nazi structures and mobilized to prevent neo-Nazi gatherings. The KB was the first organization to work in

such a systematic way, and hence it was a precursor to the anti-Nazi work of autonomist anti-fascists later on. A special role among anti-fascist groups was taken on by the KPD/ML in October 1979 with the formation its 'Volksfront', or Popular Front. The impetus for this new group was the nomination of Franz-Josef Strauss as chancellor candidate for the CDU/CSU. The BWK worked together with the KPD/ML in the Popular Front. In 1980, the Popular Front participated in the federal elections in voting districts all across Germany. The number of votes they received was a total fiasco. But the organization stayed together as a possible leftist umbrella group, but in reality it remained in the hands of the BWK. The Popular Front took part in anti-fascist mobilizations, but limited its praxis in the mid 1980s to publishing its magazine, 'Antifaschististische Nachrichten'.

The Rise Of Neo-Fascism

In 1969, when the grand coalition of SPD and CDU collapsed, the far-right NPD party lost its influence within a short period of time. The party was torn by internal feuds and a steady decline in membership. Party activists abandoned the NPD and formed new groups and parties which were more extreme than the NPD. The most well were known groups the underground NSDAP/AO, a new "formative organization" seeking to emulate Hitler's Nazi party, formed in 1971, the 'Wehrsportgruppe Hoffmann', formed in 1974, and the Popular Socialist Movement of Germany/Labor Party (VSBD/PdA), formed in 1975. A group of greater significance was the Action Front of National Socialists (ANS), formed by Michael Kühnen in Hamburg in 1978. Various armed fascist groups arose from these new far-right organizations. Between 1980 and 1983, several people were murdered and injured in bombing and arson attacks carried out by the far-right. The most serious attack occurred on September 26, 1981 when a bomb exploded at the Oktoberfest in Munich, killing 13 people and wounding 200 others.

The New National-Socialism

The new fascist groups drew their militancy and ideology from the old NSDAP. But most of these groups were alienated and separated from one another. After a while, however, Michael Kühnen emerged as an integrating figure. Under his leadership, a large number of the far-right splinter groups were united in the ANS/NA in 1983. The ANS/NA quickly rose to great prominence in the neo-fascist scene and was banned that same year. Cadre from the ANS/NA then took over the fascist

FAP party, which remained one of the most organized segments of the violent far-right until it too was banned in 1995.

The first neo-Nazi skinhead groups appeared in the late 1970s. Skins are not always actual members of far-right organizations. Most skinhead youths are more interested in drinking, music, and fighting than politics. So although Nazi skins could be mobilized for demonstrations and sometimes carried out actions on their own, they remain mostly a sub-cultural right-wing extremist, racist milieu.

The "Rock Against The Right" Initiative

In the mid 1970s, the NPD tried to initiative a new far-right movement by means of rallies and demonstrations. After 1975, the center of this campaign was the NPD's annual 'Deutschland-treffen' on June 17th.

In 1977, the NPD's Germany Meeting in Frankfurt was attended by 4,000 fascists from home and abroad. Neo-Nazis attacked a counter demonstration of about 1,000 anti-fascists. Following that experience, antifas called for a nationwide mobilization to Frankfurt in 1978. On June 17, 1978, 10,000 anti-fascists tried to occupy the central meeting place of the NPD at the Römerberg, resulting in heavy clashes with riot police. One year later, a variety of groups formed the "Rock Against The Right" (RgR) initiative to mobilize to Frankfurt.

The RgR was a coalition of political organizations as well as artists and music groups, who sought to organize a broad anti-fascist mobilization by means of a series of concerts. RgR saw itself as an initiative which sought to unite politics and culture. This idea was taken up in many areas.

In 1979, Rock Against The Right was a big success. Despite being banned, it was possible to push through a massive anti-fascist demonstration and the NPD failed to appear. In 1980, two RgR events were organized. A big concert was held in Frankfurt, but the NPD did not meet in Frankfurt. Instead, the NPD held its meeting in Philippsthal near the city of Eschwege. This fact was known before the RgR mobilization started. So another RgR event was held in Eschwege as well. A call went out to blockade the streets leading into Philippsthal on June 17, 1980. This action by some 10,000 anti-fascists was largely successful in shutting down the NPD's meeting. This major anti-fascist success brought an end to the NPD's strategy. In the following years, there were no serious attempts by the party to organized public appearances.

Attempts At Organization

successful mobilizations against the NPD's 'Deutschlandtreffen' showed just how big the anti-fascist spectrum involved in direct confrontations had become. In 1980, the KB attempted to organize independent anti-fascist groups into a new organization. But this attempt never got beyond its initial stages. But there were other attempts to coordinate the efforts of anti-fascist groups. The KB and others called together the Hannover Anti-Fascist Initiative, which invited antifa groups from northern Germany and Frankfurt

to a meeting in Hannover. Nine groups attended this meeting and decided to hold other joint meetings in the future. This "North German Antifa Meeting" became a regular event. Over time, the composition of the meetings changed, but the number of groups involved was usually about ten.

Inside this north German coalition, however, there was some dualism. Whereas the KB was mainly interested in information exchange, autonomists viewed the meeting as an action union.

Hamburg

A coalition called the 'Antifa-Bündnis' brought together various groups in 1981 who sought to counter the increasing appearances by neo-Nazi groups in Hamburg. Almost from the beginning, there were conflicts between the KB and autonomists within the coalition. The KB criticized the political approach of the autonomists as mere "brawling". Some people left the coalition to form Anti-Fascist Action Hamburg (AAH) in 1983. The founding document of the AAH read as follows:

- "I. Anti-Fascist Action was re-organized in February in resistance to the rise in neo-fascist activity by organized national-socialist and far-right groups.
- "2. The task of Anti-Fascist Action is to coordinate, initiate, and organize the anti-fascist efforts of organized and unorganized leftists.
- "3. The goal of Anti-Fascist Action is to overcome the mere actionism of responses to fascist attacks and the increasing reformism and splintering of the antiimperialist movement." (published in the brochure 'Antifa Texte 2', November 1986)

The group AAH formulated a very different approach than that of the KB. But the political goal of AAH also went beyond the political



The publication
Anti-Fascist
Information was
established by
the KB. The
magazine was
attempt to give
an organizational direction
to the new antifascist movement. The publication folded
after just four
issues.

understanding of most autonomists, who primarily saw their first line of action as the fight against Nazis in direct confrontations. All three of these tendencies participated in the so-called north German anti-fascist campaigns after 1982.

Emerging From The Sub-Culture

In the first half of 1983, Anti-Fascist Action Hamburg published a text entitled "Anti-Fascist Work – Part Of Autonomist Politics".

This text outlined the deficiencies in autonomist antifa politics up to that time. "They [the 'Autonomen'] have so far failed to tie their struggle against visible fascist structures with the struggle against fascism in the society and the imperialist apparatus of control. ... Beyond informative contacts, they have no common strategy against the system and no lasting structures." A form of organization was propagated "which is different in both form and content from reformist and 'communist' party-led structures". The text went on as follows: "Autonomist politics offers immediate liberation from outside control through resistance to the system by generalizing information and planning, developing all forces according to the actual contradictions and the freedom of each individual to reach binding decisions and create associations."

The class forces which are of significance to the resistance and which must be won over were characterized as follows: "The traditionally decisive class forces of the working class are in the ideological grip of the bourgeoisie; their struggles are directed by trade unions which are part of the ruling power apparatus; their resistance is directed against social cutbacks, for job security, and in defense of their national privileges. ... The decisive forces which reject the system and seek to disrupt it have organized themselves in the form of a sub-culture. ... The decisive force which could topple the system remains the working class. ... Only when there is a joining of the struggles in the reproductive sphere – with their direct actions and defense of free spaces - with the productive forces will social revolts develop into a social revolution. "The functioning of fascist groups prevents such a development. "They [the fascists]

develop the reactionary consciousness of the masses and recruit radicalized elements for the 'national interests' in the peace movement, for 'blood and land' in the ecology movement, and for the hatred of foreigners within the social movements." But the struggle is not to be reduced to a mere anti-Nazi fight. "Neo-fascist activities and organizations alone are not of primary importance for the rulings powers nor for the resistance; the dangers lies in fascist developments becoming intertwined with the state and the society..."

As for the role of autonomist politics in developing a social revolution, the paper goes on as follows: "The acceptance of the [state's] monopoly on violence will be a hampering defeat unless we can show that resistance is possible, that free spaces are in the interests of the masses, and that people can learn to live together - to focus this newly awakened consciousness onto other burning issues. ... Experiences with the party control of the 'communists', the lies about grassroots politics from the reformists, and the perfection of the surveillance state have so far prevented the autonomist movement from creating lasting structures and associations. Only when we have binding structures, which aren't formed spontaneously, can we, for example, bring the resistance against neo-fascist structures into the context of the struggle against latent fascism in the society, the fascist praxis of the state's instruments of repression, and Germany's support for fascist regimes in other countries."

This text was distributed nationwide and summarized the thoughts on strategy and politics of autonomist anti-fascism from the point of view of Anti-Fascist Action Hamburg. Although these ideas played a significant role in the development of autonomist anti-fascism, few people actually took up these positions.

The First Actions By The North Germans

Autonomist groups from northern Germany mobilized for a demonstration against a meeting by SS veterans on May 21, 1983 in the city of Bad Hersfeld. The fascist ANS/NA also called for a meeting in the city at the same time. When the



Typical of antifascist actions in 1980s, these pictures (on pages 48-50) were taken during the SS Veterans' meeting in Bad Hersfeld, May 1983. On the edges of the meeting, the ANS/NA tried to stage a march. Autonomist anti-fascists reacted in a militant fashion to the neo-Nazis. Riot police responded immediately, by protecting the neo-Nazis.



ANS/NA marched up to the edges of a DGB trade union rally, they were attacked by autonomists. Riot police responded immediately by attacking the anti-fascists. Trade union marshalls formed a human chain around their rally to prevent the autonomists from seeking cover from the police attacks. There were several arrests and many people were injured.

Groups from northern Germany played a much larger role in the actions against the far-right 'Stahlhelmbundes' in June in the city of Celle than they did in Bad Hersfeld. In order to avoid being isolated politically, an effective form of action was devised. "Today, June 17, we, members of autonomist antifa groups, symbolically occupied the Union hall in Celle. We feel this action is an effective means of halting the 'Stahlhelm' meeting in Celle. We decided on this action after certain forces once again tried to force us out of the anti-fascist movement and who have made antifa demonstrations mere demonstrations of helplessness." (Statement from the occupation group, June 17, 1983) Police forces provided protection for the Stahlhelm meeting, and it was held. Before the meeting, however, there were clashes with anti-fascists, during which police used watercannons against demonstrators.

The experiences in Bad Hersfeld and Celle had an effect on preparations for the actions being planned against the NPD's annual party congress. The antifa groups from northern Germany participated in an inter-regional meeting in the town of Fallingbostel. At this meeting, a joint approach was discussed by antifa groups, DGB trade unions, and the VVN. But the DGB and VVN called for a separate rally at the former concentration camp in Bergen-Belsen, while the northern German anti-fascists propagated a blockade of the NPD's assembly hall. That was characteristic of the situation in the 1980s. The DGB and the VVN/BdA stood for the concept of spatial separation, holding rallies well away from neo-Nazi events and rejecting direct action. Autonomists and other radical forces mobilized directly to prevent fascist events. But their forces were too weak to actually disrupt the meetings,



and the coordination and organizing before the actions was usually insufficient. But they attacked nonetheless. The resulting clashes made political issues out of the fascist parties and their meetings, and the role which state organs play in protecting neo-fascist events and preventing anti-fascist resistance.

A Turning Point

The mobilization against the NPD's party congress in Fallingbostel on October 1, 1983 created a great resonance. It was possible to get almost 2,500 people to participate in the planned blockade of the meeting hall, making it the largest action so far of the north German anti-fascists. Convoys of anti-fascists travelling to city were stopped at police checkpoints. Because of a lack of communication, this weakened the anti-fascist action right from the start. The 'Heidmarkhalle', where the NPD were convening, was surrounded by police and barbed wire with only two entrances open. Due to a lack of coordination, the antifascists were not able to organize an effective blockade. It was mainly the well-prepared antifas from the Hamburg and Bremen convoys who were able to get past police and unleash a hail of stones against the Heidmarkhalle. It took police several moments to regroup. Then riot police proceeded to force the almost 1,000 autonomists from the city. There were heavy clashes. The other 1,500 anti-fascists ended their actions soon after.

In the following days, the militant attack on the NPD congress made headlines in papers across Germany, and Fallingbostel became an issue within the leftist scene. The controversial discussions led to diverging positions.

In Hamburg, autonomists working within the northern German scene escalated their conflict with the KB. Because of an article in 'Arbeiterkampf', the KB's newspaper, which dealt critically with the Fallingbostel action (AK 239), autonomist anti-fascists occupied the editorial offices of AK. They confiscated lots of materials and demanded that the paper print a statement from them uncensored. They then proceeded to

To prevent autonomists from seeking cover in the crowds, DGB trade unionists form a human chain.

In front of their eyes, militant anti-fascists are beaten by plainclothes and regular police, sprayed with mace, and arrested. One plainclothes cop even draws his gun.

An arrested antifascist is dragged over the pavement by plainclothes police. The neo-Nazis, who were safely protected by the cops, could also observe these scenes.

The picture at the right shows an arrested antifascist being taken away right in front of the fascists.



print it themselves. The events in Fallingbostel led autonomists in Hamburg to try and force the KB out of the north German antifa scene, which they were able to do, partly because the KB was already in organizational decline by 1983.

Differing Political Views

The KB did not view Fallingbostel as a success. They felt that a mass mobilization, such as the one in 1980 against the NPD congress in Phillipsthal, had not been achieved. Even the call to blockade the hall had not been realized. Instead, said the KB, there was a brief and meaningless attack on the Heidmarkhalle, after which police forced the autonomists out of Fallingbostel.

The KB questioned anti-fascist actions like the one in Fallingbostel altogether: "In fact, as early as Phillipsthal the question arose as to whether it was even useful to chase the NPD around to every little place they go, since they no longer are able to gather in the major cities." (AK 239, page 27)

According to the KB's analysis, the significance of neo-fascism was on the decline. They said the lack of public rallies and the decline in election percentages and membership numbers of far-right parties like the NPD were proof of that analysis. The autonomists, according to them, were over-

Fallingbostel, October 1, 1983.





estimating the significance of the new nationalsocialist movement.

"In particular, Michael Kühnen's ANS has become especially hyped up by the anti-fascist side. ... Just the mention of Kühnen's name is enough to make some anti-fascists rush out and put on their helmets and grab a club, ready to go into action—even though he and his followers are not very important politically."

This viewpoint explains why the KB placed a greater importance on publishing information about fascist organizations and groups rather than on carrying out militant actions. In fact, one central demand of the KB was for the state to ban fascist organizations.

The Role Of Fascist Parties

Autonomists don't call for a ban on fascist parties. They assume that the state has no interest in defeating fascist structures. According to autonomists, the danger of neo-fascism lies not in the size of far-right parties or their electoral success, but rather their function within the system.

"Slogans like 'Foreigners out!' are precursors to changes in state policy; women, according to the fascist ideal, should return to their 'exclusive' roles as housewives, mothers, and sex objects; ... The far-right parties offer the establishment a means of seeming to be against 'the right'; ... What's more, they can always be used as terrorist reserves on behalf of the system. ... And fascist gangs can be used against leftist forces, in so far as they limit the degree to which their antiantifa activities draw on historical fascism (1933 to 1945) and remain loyal to the state." (flyer entitled "The Fight Against Fascism Means The Fight Against The Imperialist System!", anti-fascist groups, 1984)

"Furthermore, calls on the state to ban fascist organizations are dangerous, as far as mobilizing is concerned, because they serve to de-politicize people: This legitimizes the state's monopoly on violence. Calls for bans on fascist parties are based on the hope that the state (if there's enough public pressure) would act in an impartial way against the bad guys to rid the

'democratic society' of its 'undemocratic tendencies'. And this just serves to maintain the lie of the representatives and proponents of 'state law and order', namely that West Germany is actually very democratic and rooted in anti-fascist tradition — this is the view of the golden middle, which seeks to fight 'right- and left-wing extremism'." (discussion paper of autonomist anti-fascists, "Theses In Critique Of State Fascism", for the day of action on November 21, 1984 in Alhambra, Oldenburg)

The re-formation of neo-fascism and its associated terrorist violence are viewed as a dangerous development by autonomists. In order to stop this development within the neo-fascist scene, the autonomist anti-fascist movement cannot arise from a broad movement. Rather it needs to create an orientation towards anti-fascist struggle. Militancy plays a major role in this. In the following years, autonomist commandos carried out attacks on fascist logistical centers, meetings, and neo-fascist cadre. These attacks were not just symbolic, rather they were intended to demoralize the enemy, to destroy their infrastructure, and halt fascist recruitment.

The mobilization potential for militant antifascism and the direct prevention of Nazi provocations was primarily within the autonomist scene.

Two Tendencies

The concept outlined in 1983 by Anti-Fascist Action Hamburg was adopted by very few antifascists. Even the new definition of fascism remained a minority position. In issue 70/71 of 'grosse freiheit', a publication of the scene in Hamburg, in July/August 1984, some "comrades from Anti-Fascist Action" published provocative paper "Anti-Fascist Action Is Anti-Imperialist Resistance" so as to create discussion within the leftist scene. "If a person is just an antifascist, then they aren't really an anti-fascist, because they haven't understood fascism isn't the special interests of capital, the power cliques, or the mass movements; the system is fascist." According to this formulation, isolation detention in German prisons, for example, is an example of fascist praxis. Anti-fascist struggle, therefore, is a struggle against the system. The core of this thesis, which speaks of fascist imperialism and which characterized the imperialist system as fascist, was rejected by most autonomists. But not all antifa groups, not even the north Germans, were comprised exclusively of activists who defined themselves as autonomists.

Many groups were not interested in antiimperialist politics, only in direct action against Nazis. A meeting was organized in February 1984,



During an NPD-meeting in Fallingbostel on October 1, 1983 there were violent clashes provoced by brutal rioters. One policeman was seriously injured, and so he had to stay in hospital for several days. He suffered from serious head injuries and cuts and scratches on his arms. His total equiment was stolen. The illegal attack on the police officer was photographed. The published picture shows the brutality of the attack.

The Verden state attorney is now investigating against a person unknown. The charges are attempted manslaughter and robbery. The district government has offered a reward of 5.000 Marks for information about the unidentified person on the picture.

to which only autonomist antifa groups were invited, in order to form a new organization. The meeting was held in the city of Lübeck, one day before a meeting of the north Germans. But the attempt failed, and there were no further meetings.

There was also an attempt in 1984 and 1985 to initiate a women's antifa meeting in addition to the north German meetings. But this effort was also unsuccessful.

The Struggle Against Neo-Nazis

Anti-fascism developed into one aspect of the autonomist movement, one of its many struggles. In addition to the so-called north German antifascists, a meeting of west Germans from the state of North Rhein-Westphalia developed. The "north" and the "west" kept in contact by sending delegates to each other's meetings. Antifa groups from West Berlin participated in the north German meetings, while in southern Germany there was limited contact between individual groups.

From the end of 1983 to 1985, there was a great deal of anti-fascist work done. Nearly every major Nazi event was met with a counter-demonstration, which autonomists participated in. Usually these were small, regional actions. Some examples: demonstrations in 1984, 1985, and 1986 against an international Nazi meetings on November 17 at the Soldiers' Cemetery in Essel near Hannover; mobilizations against the

This call for information by police was distributed all over northern Germany. Appeals were even made on TV, asking for information leading to the arrest of the anti-fascist shown hitting a policeman in Fallingbostel, October 1983.



November 17, 1985, the Soldiers' Cemetery near Essel. Police escort "old Kameraden" past an anti-fascist demonstration. Photos: Rainer Recke ANS/NA and right-wing soccer hooligans during the Germany-Turkey international soccer match on October 26, 1983 in West Berlin; actions against the SS Veterans' meeting in March 1984 in Oberaula and May 1984 in Bad Harzburg; disruption of the founding congress of the FAP in

Lower Saxony in July 1984 in Hannover; the Chaos Days in Hannover in 1984, where Nazi skins and the ANS/NA had called for fights against punks; the state congress of the FAP in North Rhein-Westphalia in Münster in November 1984; the SS Veterans' meeting in May 1985 in Nesselwang; the NPD party congress in Lower Saxony on June 16, 1985 in Stadthagen; the opening of a FAP party office in Dortmund in August 1985. In addition to these examples, there were other mobilizations, commando actions, and public campaigns which made autonomist antifascism an important political notion and which restricted the activities of the fascists.

One Of Us

On the evening of September 28, 1985, antifascists called for a disruption of an NPD public event in Frankfurt. There were small clashes with the police. At around 9:00pm, a 36-year-old antifascist named Günter Sare was knocked over by a blast from a watercannon and then run over and killed. Reports of Günter Sare's death spread like wildfire. That same night, there was a spontaneous demonstration in Frankfurt and several attacks. The next day, the autonomist scene all across Germany reacted. On the evening of September 29 there were militant demonstrations in Hamburg, Bremen, Göttingen, Münster, Köln, Bielefeld, Duisburg, Hannover, Oldenburg, Berlin, Tübingen, Kalrsruhe, Stuttgart, Freiburg, Erlangen, Nürnberg and München. Businesses

A person is arrested during an autonomist antifascist action in Essel, November 17, 1985.



and banks had their windows smashes, and police stations were attacked. In Frankfurt alone, the damage ran into the millions. Militant demonstrations and attacks continued to spread. On the night of October 1, there were actions in every German city with an autonomist scene. The unrest lasted for more than a week. The focal point was Frankfurt, where shops were looted and people clashed with riot police every night.

In The Sights Of The State

The state apparatus was caught off guard by the wave of actions. Autonomist anti-fascism now came under greater scrutiny by the state's intelligence agency and the police. Part of this was the criminalization of the posters from Göttingen which advertized for the "Antifa Wochen" in November 1985. These posters and flyers featured a simple pencil image. This image wasn't intended as a piece of art, rather just a sketch of an idea for a later work (see page 54 of the German edition). Although the name KuK wasn't on the image, it could be considered the first piece of work by the initiative. The impetus for the drawing came from the movement, for the movement. What's important is that it was the first attempt at illustrating autonomist anti-fascism in a complex picture. The work was criminalized under Paragraph 90a (insulting the German state and its symbols). On November 4, 1985, police raided a bookshop, a printing press, and two private homes. Posters and flyers were confiscated. When the local publication 'Göttinger Stadtzeitung' published the image in solidarity, their offices and one more private home were raided as well. After that, autonomists across the country began using the image. Another reaction to the criminalization of the "Antifa Wochen" poster was the 1986 poster "Degenerate Art" (see page 166 of the German edition). The background for the state investigations in Göttingen was the desire by the police to gain some information on antifa structures. The only name mentioned in conjunction with the posters was Ernst Schneller, a man who often allowed his name to be used for legality reasons (V.i.S.d.P.) for leftist publications in Göttingen, and who consequently faced several police investigations as a result. Despite all their efforts, police could not bring charges against Ernst Schneller. After a year, they decided that the name was a fake to begin with. In fact, Ernst Schneller was a real person, a famous German antifascist born in 1890, murdered by the SS in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1944.

The state's investigations against the "Antifa Weeks" poster and flyers were eventually dropped.

The Highpoint

Following the death of Günter Sare, the autonomist scene began to deal with the issue of fascism more intensely. One result was the campaign against the 'Gärtnerei-Müller' in Mainz-Gonsenheim on April 20, 1986. This place was a significant Nazi meeting point. A huge wooden barracks there named 'Walhalla' was the site of annual celebrations for Hitler's birthday every April 20th. The antifa blockade of the site became a national issue and the Nazi meetings there soon became headline news. In the night of May 21, 1986 a commando named "Revolutionary Anti-Fascists – Fire And Flames" firebombed 'Walhalla'. The building burned to the ground.

Antifa groups in southern Germany joined together much like the "northern Germans" had. The first antifa meeting in southern Germany was held on May 10-11, 1986. Autonomist antifascists now had a structure which covered all of West Germany. The first mobilization by this network was against the FAP's first ever national congress on June 7, 1986 in Stuttgart. Despite police checkpoints and many arrests before the actions even began, a good number of anti-fascists made it to the site of a legal rally organized by a local anti-fascist coalition. Autonomist antifascists soon split up and surrounded the hall where the FAP were going to meet. Many Nazis turned away in fear, and those that did make it inside suffered bumps and bruises. The anti-fascist action was a success. But by 1988, the nationwide structure of the anti-fascist movement began to fall apart.

The Bitter End

The attempt to give an anti-imperialist focus to anti-fascist organizing had not progressed much by 1987. Although there was a nationwide autonomist anti-fascist structure, it was based primarily on anti-Nazi struggles. Years of elevated discussions had resulted in a vanguardist organizational structure.

In between militant actions there arose a political consciousness represented by the slogan, "In The Struggle Against Fascism, Rely On Our Own Forces!"

In the early 1980s, there was a strong autonomist movement, and the tactic of preventing the neo-fascist formation process by means of militant actions did bring successes. But in the long run, this approach led to isolation. Politically concentrated on a shrinking scene, anti-fascist politics was not able to develop any broader relevance.



The exclusion of autonomist antifa groups from the reformist spectrum was, and is still is, almost impossible to overcome. Part of the problem is that autonomist antifa groups don't recognize the problem of their political isolation and once they started on a path they often didn't see it through until the end. A lack of political imagination led to agitating against the same stereotypes all the time. After a few years, many people became fed up with riding all over Germany trying to break up Nazi meetings. Although attacks on Nazi centers and so on did get reported in the media, there was usually no after effect. In general, the anti-fascist movement became politically stagnant. Failed internal discussions and personal splits within the structures led to political weakness. The result was increasing political and personal frustration and a process of degeneration. More and more people pulled out of the antifa meetings. The decline of the northern German antifa structures was illustrative of this process. A solid core of people had grouped itself around these meetings by 1987, partly losing its ties to the cities. In fact, it had become its own group in and of itself. Despite being weakened by internal discussions and the resignation of some groups and people, a demonstration was called against the autumn camp of the Viking Youth in Hetendorf near Celle. A total of 26 mobilizational events were organized, primarily in northern Germany and West Berlin. But only about 400 people were mobilized, almost exclusively autonomists. This small demo was surrounded by an army of police. The result of the Hetendorf action was demoralizing. At any other point in time it could have just been forgotten, but in 1987 it was a fiasco. The "northern German" meetings degenerated after that, and personal and political splits led to many activists quitting. Intervals between meetings became greater, and there were no more political impulses from the group. In early 1989, the northern German antifa meeting was finally abandoned.

Frankfurt,
September 28,
1985: Murder of
Günter Sare. He
was run over by a
police water
cannon while
protesting
against the
fascist NPD. He
died on the spot.
The picture was
taken shortly
before.



Criminalized poster of the "Anti-Fascist weeks" in Göttingen, 1985.

A New Concept

The collapse of autonomist anti-fascist structures, as with the experiences gained from the various single-issue movements, did not give rise to any new concepts. Many older activists turned their backs to political struggle, sometimes leaving behind a text or a paper with a clenched fist for good measure. Formulations such as "The autonomists don't make mistakes, they are the mistake!" were made. Other people continued onward with old models. Mistakes and discussions began to repeat themselves, because experiences are very often not re-transmitted in the scene. Only in Göttingen did a concept arise which was based on the northern German experiences. This concept was based on three fundamental points: a lasting group structure with a local base, coalition politics, and militant actions. In contrast to the north Germans, who stressed mobilizations against nationwide Nazi meetings, this concept sought to base itself on anti-fascist politics in the city of Göttingen and the surrounding regions. The goal of this was to win acceptance and a place for autonomist antifa politics among broader circles. The main idea was to break out of political isolation, because only by working together with different social forces would it be possible to halt the expansion of neo-fascism. At that time, neofascism was not generally regarded a social problem. The media spoke only of a few isolated incidents. Confrontations between anti-fascists and neo-Nazis were portrayed as unpolitical fights between rival youth gangs.

It's only possible to break through political isolation by means of joint actions. Up until then, autonomist politics had always been relative. When fascists held meetings or carried out other actions, a counter-demo was called. In Göttingen, however, an offensive concept was developed. Don't wait for the Nazis, rather go to them, put them on the defensive. The time and place for demonstrations was to be determined by the antifascists, forcing the Nazis to react. The first time this new concept was tried was during a demonstration by the Göttingen Anti-Fascist Coalition in May 1988.

"Hetendorf in 1987 clearly showed us what can happen when we carry out an action all on our own under the present political and social conditions. ... In contrast to this was the demonstration against the FAP's Lower Saxony headquarters in Mackenrode near Göttingen on May 7, 1988. Here, not only were we able to mobilize more people from our own scene, but we had a much bigger potential for people due to our coalition work with other groups not from our spectrum. In the end, there were 1,500 to 2,000

people at the demonstration, who were able to march right past the FAP center without being stopped by the police. And this, despite the fact that there was a black bloc of some 1,000 people, masked and wearing helmets and armed with clubs. The cops also could not react when paintbombs and fireworks were thrown at the Nazi house and the officers guarding it.

"People did not distance themselves from the autonomists, not even when at least one stone took out a window of the house. That is not mere acceptance, rather all the groups which participated in this demonstration, from the Greens to the DGB trade unions, were part of this militant action. That is significant politically, and it made the Mackenrode demo quite unique." (position paper from autonomist anti-fascists in Göttingen, September 4, 1988)

The Göttingen "Anti-Fascist Coalition" was formed in 1987 in response to a series of brutal attacks by neo-Nazis in and around Göttingen. The coalition disbanded in 1988.

"The Coalition was defined as an action alliance, in other words, there was no political equation of the political positions of the autonomists with those of the DGB, for example on the issue of banning fascist organizations, rather there was a general acceptance of differing positions with the aim of coordinating actions jointly. The idea behind this 'acceptance' was to form a broad front against the fascists, to form a broad anti-fascist resistance in which no one group would dominate over another. For us, this gave us the opportunity to better relate our militant praxis and be better protected from criminalization." (ibid.)

The Göttingen Coalition did display a further development of autonomist politics, but it was a departure from previous positions and hence many autonomists rejected this approach. The Coalition was the source of many critiques. Some people were kicked out of the antifa groups in Göttingen and had to form new ones. The old antifa groups eventually fell apart, whereas the people who propagated coalition politics went on to form the organization Autonome Antifa (M) in 1990.

The New Wave

When the old antifa groups no longer existed and many other groups disbanded, there was a wave of electoral successes by far-right parties in 1989. In January, the 'Republikaner' entered the senate in West Berlin with 7.6% of the vote, and the NPD entered the Frankfurt city council with 6.6%. There were further electoral victories after this. The NPD and the DVU formed the 'Liste D' ("D" standing for Germany) to take part in the elections for the European Parliament on June 18, 1989.

The 'Liste D' sent election propaganda to 28 million homes all across Germany and became known nationwide. The far-right organized election rallies all across the country leading up to June. The anti-fascist movement and autonomist scene responded immediately. Many new antifa groups were formed. There were actions against far-right election rallies in almost every city, often ending in clashes with police. When the DVU and the Republikaner failed to win any seats in the European Parliament and their electoral success began to wane, the wave of anti-fascist actions also receded. A process of dissolution started once again.

"What did all of this bring us? For the nth time our weakness was shown in front of our very eyes, mostly resulting from a lack of group structures and a lack of content discussions among one another. Sure, for the moment we were able to mobilize for actions and get people out into the streets, but when the action's over, things collapse. These campaigns don't result in anything.

"Except for kicking up lots of dust and perhaps stopping the actions by the bad guys, we don't achieve anything. Such actions alone don't mean that we are strong. At best they represent the circles we are walking around in, perhaps giving temporary hope to frustrated people and bringing in some new ones. But they do not represent a further development.

...Resistance is only effective when it weakens the enemy and strengthens us. That means our actions must always aim at directly preventing and defeating fascist activities. Only direct action has an effective character of sabotage. Only direct action can mobilize for our idea of a self-determined, emancipatory praxis. But such actions needed to be grounded in continuing political work. Just organizing a militant action on its own is empty, it cannot have a political effect, because militancy is a means, not a content on its own. Militancy can only have content when it stands together with other political work and action." ("Brush Fires And The Myth Of Brush Fires: A Look Back At The Actions Against The European Election Campaign By The Fascists", published in 'Göttinger Anschläge', No.6, July 1989)

The Short Summer Of Anarchy

When West Germany annexed the DDR, the autonomist movement enjoyed a major upsurge and an autonomist scene formed in the former East Germany. The main fields of action for the new movement were squatting and the struggle against neo-Nazi gangs active in the former DDR. The autonomist scene in the East based its political orientation primarily on anarchist ideals. The reason for this was the experiences of activists

under the "real existing socialism" of East Germany. What they had in common with the autonomist movement in the West, however, were their forms of organization and their militant praxis.

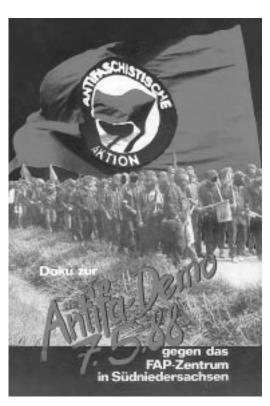
The main difference between the East autonomists and the movement in West Germany was that they did not arise from resistance movements against major projects such as nuclear plants or from a hard confrontation with the capitalist system. Rather, they developed in the situation of a social vacuum. When the DDR was disbanded and before the new capitalist power structures had fully established themselves, squatting buildings was easy.

For many youths, this provided a field of action. When state institutions moved in to put an end to the squatting movement in the early 1990s and after many fascist organizations were banned, the autonomist scene in the East declined rapidly. But an anti-fascist scene continued to exist with a high mobilizational potential. That was shown during the nationwide demonstration against the Nazi training center in Wurzen near Leipzig. In November 1996, more than 8,000 people demonstrated against neo-fascism there, the largest antifa demo ever in the former East Germany following reunification.

Hard Confrontation

A wave of unprecedented right-wing terror accompanied the annexation of East Germany by

Brochure about the demonstration in Mackenrode, May 7, 1988.



West Germany. Between 1989 and 1993, more than 30 people were murdered in Nazi attacks. A wave of arson attacks on refugee hostels led to a new public perception about far-right groups. In particular, the pogroms and racist attacks on refugees in Rostock in 1992 raised international public criticism against Germany. The German government tried to counter-act this bad image by outlawing some fascist groups and supporting candlelight vigils. In 1992/93, people in the major cities were called upon to take to the streets with candles in the evening to "make a statement against racist violence". Many thousands of people participated in these vigils. But this was a shortterm initiative, and parallel to this the state set about to restrict the asylum laws.

Anti-Fascist Self-Help

Autonomists propagated steps against right-wing terror on the streets with "anti-fascist self-help". In line with this, an attempt was made to win over young "street gangs" into anti-fascist practise.

At the end of the 1980s, a "youth front" of groups arose which attempted to mobilize school aged youths for the anti-fascist struggle. In the fall of 1991, the anarchist group 'Edelweißpiraten' was another organizational attempt along these same lines.

During confrontations with Nazis, people were not only injured, but sometimes even killed. The most famous was the head of the fascist party 'Deutsche Liga', Gerhard Kaindl. During a meeting of this far-right splinter party on April 4, 1992 in a restaurant in Berlin, a group of people in masks attacked the right-wingers. During the attack, Kaindl died of a knife wound.

This action unleashed a series of discussions within the autonomist scene. The main issue was the spontaneous nature of the attack and its lack of planning, and the fact that someone was killed. A part of the scene was unprepared for the resulting wave of heavy repression.

Several people were arrested in the wake of Kaindl's death, and others went into hiding. Particularly hard hit was the group 'Antifascist Genclik' (Anti-Fascist Youth), a group of mainly Turkish youths founded in 1989. Up until that point, the group had mainly only appeared as supporters on flyers announcing mobilizations or during trial observations. On November 15, 1994, three people were convicted of assault and sentenced to 3 years in prison, and two youths were given probation. One man stayed underground and eventually joined the guerrilla struggle of the PKK in Kurdistan. He fell as a martyr in Turkey.



May 13, 1989: Anti-fascist demonstration in front of Göttingen's town hall against a 'Liste D' election rally for the European elections.

Anti-Racist Work

A number of anti-racist initiatives were formed in response to racist attacks and changes in Germany's asylum laws. These groups supported refugees and immigrants in a variety of ways, including providing support to refugees living illegally in Germany. Autonomists were also active in these initiatives. Other actions included a blockade of the German parliament in Bonn in May 1993 when Article 16 (the right to asylum) of Germany's Constitution was changed.

In the mid 1990s, the tide of anti-fascist and anti-racist mobilization subsided. Only a few groups continued with steady work, whereas many others simply disbanded.

Substantially New

In 1990, the formation of the Autonome Antifa (M) represented a substantially new concept within the autonomist scene. A form of politics was begun which aimed to draw consequences from the past shortcomings of autonomist politics. The group strived to make clear, achievable, and continuing politics, which would be open to criticism. Their understanding of anti-fascism was also anti-imperialist in nature, and the group's praxis was tied into various sectors of leftist politics. In addition to demonstrations against Nazi centers there were also internationalist campaigns, actions against cuts in social services, anti-patriarchy work, and cultural activities.

A Step Outwards

The Autonome Antifa (M) was the first autonomist group which engaged in an active media campaign. The group spoke with the

mainstream media, gave interviews, and allowed photographers and other journalists to document their actions. The group was also engaged in the effort to create a nationwide organization.

The Autonome Antifa (M) outlined its positions in a text published nationwide in 1991: "We must create conditions which make it possible to overcome regional and nationwide contradictions. Such contradictions come to the surface, for example, when mixed groups break apart due to a failure to address their own patriarchal structures, when personal conflicts become political fights, or when there is an inability to turn militant intentions into practice. We must arrive at positions and develop strategies which will make us a factor once again in social processes, and with an ability to attract people, attacking the ruling conditions and making politics with a perspective of change. ... Creating structures which are accountable means, for us, creating a legal organization. The function of the organization would be a point of approach and reference for people who wish to organize, and it would be open to contacts with the media. Forming an organization would allow us to reach and work together with more people than before. For example people who live in rural areas, older people, etc. We don't speak of an organization just so that people can join it, but because it would increase our organizational and financial possibilities. The organization would assume such tasks as organizing political concerts, demos, agit-prop actions, and so on. In other words, the step towards forming an organization would be a step towards developing the political counter-culture on a larger scale. Further political work would consist of political education, seminars, and events. The organization would mean, for us, escaping from the



The first demonstration by autonomist anti-fascists in Leipzig, May 10, 1990. "Against NeoFascism And The Annexation Of The DDR By West Germany!"

Photo: Rainer Recke

petty-bourgeois rut known as the scene. Political work cannot be conducted exclusively through personal contacts and sympathies, rather it must be based on political goals and necessities." ("Discussion Paper On Autonomist Organizing", Autonome Antifa (M), Göttingen, August 1991)

Between A Plenary Session And A Party

Because the "Discussion Paper On Autonomist Organizing" was tied to a concrete initiative, it created quite a storm in autonomist publications. A flood of papers criticizing it soon followed.

Other antifa groups were discussing the question of organizing at this same time. Subsequent meetings divided people around the notions of the form and substance of an organization. Some wanted coordination for anti-Nazi campaigns, others wanted to build an anti-imperialist organization. Some groups pulled out of these meetings. Later on, the Nationwide Antifa Meeting (BAT) was formed. Eleven other groups went on to form the Anti-Fascist Action/Nationwide Organization (AA/BO) in July 1992. This marked a new attempt at nationwide autonomist organizing. The AA/BO was to be an umbrella organization of active antifa groups – nothing more, nothing less.

In September 1993, the groups who made up the AA/BO published a joint brochure entitled 'EinSatz!'. In this publication, the various groups discussed the foundations of their organizations, their self-definition, and their political work.

Several campaigns against neo-fascist centers were organized. Under the motto "Against The Fascist Centers!", three demonstrations were organized against neo-Nazi meeting centers in 1993/94: in March 1993 against a fascist schooling center in Adelebsen near Göttingen; in April 1993 against the nationwide Nazi meeting point in Mainz-Gonsenheim; and in February

1994 against the Nazi presence in Detmold-Pivitsheide. Also in 1994, the AA/BO played an active role in 'Aktion '94', a campaign against the annual Rudolph Hess Memorial March by neofascists.

The approach to historical work by the AA/BO was also unique to the autonomist scene. In the fall of 1993, the AA/BO organized a campaign around the 75th anniversary of the November Revolution of 1918 in Germany. In addition, there were also exhibitions, and demonstrations concerning Hitler's putsch of November 9, 1923, the 'Kristallnacht' of 1938, and the "Fall of the Wall" in 1989. A brochure was also published, entitled "November 9th - History Is Made". On May 8, 1995, the 50th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi fascism, AA/BO groups organized a campaign and published several joint brochures and posters.

In the "super election year" of 1994, the AA/BO took a position on parliamentarianism. In contrast to the traditional autonomist line of calling for a boycott and sabotage of the election, the AA/BO tied its critique of parliamentarianism with a call for people to organize themselves politically. The AA/BO organized a campaign and a demonstration in Bonn under the motto "Take A Stand! Choose The Anti-Fascist Struggle!". AA/BO groups also placed a great emphasis on work with youths, something which was also relatively uncommon for autonomist groups up to that time.

Coalition Politics

In addition to its idea of an organization, the Autonome Antifa (M) also presented a new concept with respect to coalition politics: "The politics of Autonome Antifa (M) is fundamentally aimed at making autonomist and anti-imperialist positions part of the general discourse. That means becoming a clearly definable political force, open to joint politics. It also means going outside the notion of the 'scene'. So it's important to work together with other groups, even ones which are not from the traditional leftist spectrum, and we aim to do this." ("Documentation On The Demonstration In Adelebsen-Göttingen on March 20, 1993", May 1993)

There were two classical coalition demonstrations: on March 20, 1993 against the NPD house in Adelebsen with 2,000 people, and the June 4, 1994 demonstration against the FAP center in Northeim with 2,500 participants. Neither these demos nor any other Autonome Antifa (M) demonstrations were registered with the police, as the law in Germany stipulates. But

there was a demonstration "concept", which was made available via the media beforehand. This concept was adhered to. The demonstrations were well organized, with clearly recognizable marshalls responsible for communication. But all those taking part are responsible for how things proceed. The demonstration concept gave the police and authorities an idea of what to expect with the demonstrations. That was the desired effect. In this way, it was possible to push through several "illegalities", such as blocs of masked demonstrators. Talks with authorities or the police only took place by means of the local media.

The black bloc was a part of many demonstrations, in particular all of the mass coalition demonstrations. The function of this black bloc is as follows: "The bloc documents that the autonomists will not be hemmed in by the state's rules of the game. We demonstrate in a form which illustrates our self-understanding – state laws are not recognized, and the state's monopoly on violence is questioned. Even when certain actions by the black bloc are decided on in advance, that doesn't change the fact that the black bloc has to be pushed through against the law. The black bloc has an even greater significance during a demonstration against a fascist center. The message to the Nazis is clear. It shows the fascists that this is not a mainstream protest, rather we will resist them militantly if they try and disrupt the demo, or if they continue their politics in the future. Also, the black bloc gives us the ability to act, even if the only things flying out of the bloc are signal flares or some firecrackers. It's not wise to develop such activities without being masked. The bloc provides protection from the cameras of the police and the fascists. And should the police attack the demonstration, the bloc provides a means to resist." (ibid.)

The black bloc, therefore, is used for political and tactical reasons. The largest of the coalition demonstrations were called by a spectrum ranging from the autonomists to the Greens and the DGB trade unions. With the black bloc at the front of the demo, the political weight of the autonomists at such demonstrations was made very clear. Autonomist anti-fascism became a deciding political factor, at least regionally. However, a nationwide use of this concept has not taken place.

Prevented Criminalization

On July 5-6, 1994, raids on 36 homes across Germany were aimed at alleged members of Autonome Antifa (M). Eventually, 17 people faced criminal charges under Paragraphs 129 and 129a (membership in a criminal organization; support for a terrorist organization). After years of legal

wrangling, on September 16, 1996 the charges were dropped in exchange for a fine of 51,000 German marks, which was paid to the concentration camp memorial at Mittelbau-Dora. Thanks to broad public solidarity, it was possible to prevent the criminalization of Autonome Antifa (M) as a criminal organization.

The Situation In The 1990s

In the 1990s as well, the autonomist movement has not been able to create accountable structures. Such attempts have remained as mere tendencies within the autonomist scene. Autonomists have remained as mere activists. If you take part, you're either completly in or you're out. Changes in generation take place without a re-transmission of political experiences. If someone leaves the scene, they simply disappear and never return. New people or groups start their activities, as always, in response to concrete situations. Only in rare instances do these draw on past experiences.

The autonomist movement ceased to exist as a large political movement in the 1990s. Only in those areas where structures exist, like centers or publications, or where there is continuing resistance to Nazi meetings being organized are there any notable autonomist groups still around. No conceptional political ideas or long-term strategies are being developed.

The militancy of the 1980s has largely been lost. Confrontations have been reduced to riots after demonstrations or fights with neo-Nazis. There is hardly any autonomist commando militancy these days. All in all, the autonomists are losing their relevance.

But fields of conflict do arise, resulting in quick mobilizations, for example against the transport of nuclear waste. But no matter how important these short-term mobilizations are, they can't bring the movement out of its crisis. Without accountable Demonstration in Bad Lauterberg in the Harz region on the 61st anniversary of the Nazis' seizure of power, January 1994.



The black bloc at the head of the demonstration "Fight The FAP!" on June 4,1994 in Northeim.



forms of organizing, which can be theoretically and practically further developed and create initiatives, no perspective can be developed. An analysis of the rise and fall of the autonomist movement over the years is proof of this seemingly banal statement.

Experiences gained from the past 20 years have been mainly of use to the state. The police apparatus has been strengthened, and restrictions on demonstrations and the repression of political resistance have increased significantly.

At The End Of The Road, The Start Of The Future

The autonomist movement of the 1980s has long since been passe. The fields of resistance which

gave rise to it are gone, the entire social and political situation has changed. Aside from those things which are of historical interest and importance, a fundamental problem runs through the entire history of the resistance movement in Germany. In the absence of a legal, accountable organization with a clear content direction, there can be no political perspective. Sure, the autonomist movement can continue on in its present form for a few more years, but it will not be a political factor without developing an organization.

That doesn't mean that clandestine forms of organizing or militant actions are wrong. But militant actions can only reach their political potential when they are tied to legal political work. Anything else simply leads to isolation. The situation of the autonomist movement brings to mind the crisis affecting many communist organizations. With the collapse of real existing socialist countries, an entirely new situation was created. It's clear that many older lines of division are no longer relevant today. A joining together of various sectors of the still existing left could open up new possibilities and perspectives. In line with this, an important task is to create points of interest and to see to what degree cooperation is really possible. Apart from this, the process of organization within the autonomist scene will remain a decisive factor.

It would be presumptuous as individuals or as a group to propagate the general political future. But it's up to everyone to take concrete steps towards this. History is not at its end. So, take part in the struggle!



Demonstration "Against The Fascist Centers" on March 20, 1993 in Adelebsen near Göttingen. Photo: Bernward Comes

Chapter VII

Art and struggle

The initiative 'Kunst und Kampf' (Art And Struggle) arose in the 1980s from the autonomist movement as a conceptual idea for a cultural-political initiative. The basis for the KuK project is the acquisition of the notion of resistance as a conscious instrument in political struggle.

KuK works on a new revolutionary art, and a new interpretation of culture. There is difference of content between this notion and the ideas of "sub-culture" or "counter-culture".

KuK rejects an identification with a subculture which defines itself as an alternative or an appendix to the dominant culture. The very notion of sub-culture, which is defined in reference to the dominant culture, implies that there is a "high" culture (the ruling culture) within which it's possible to find niches or freespaces for "lower" cultural projects (the sub-culture). Subculture is a notion of mainstream cultural hegemony, which aims fundamentally at the depoliticization of cultural efforts, because such cultural developments can by definition only be variations of the dominant culture. An antagonistic relationship, such as the one propagated by KuK, cannot be adequately described by the term sub-culture. The very notion of sub-culture is not adequate for KuK. As for the term "counter-culture", although it does imply a conscious opposition, it is still limited by its position as an antithesis.

The notion of "antagonistic culture" means more than mere opposition to the dominant culture, and it goes beyond anti-culture.

KuK represents the thesis of creating one's own cultural impulses, in a dialectical relationship with cultural capability. Cultural capability means culture as a total social orientation, something which can be fundamentally changed.

Such change cannot result from a protest or alternative, or from a niche or freespace culture or movement. Rather it seeks to overcome the reactionary social orientation by creating and propagating constructive, emancipatory impulses which develop and multiply in conjunction with a political movement.

For this reason, KuK is subversive and creates a cultural identity from subversive conditions. Its own cultural impulse arises from the movement and is therefore an expression of the movement

which seeks to create new social and political relations, forms of living, proposals, and traditions.

The self-understanding and history of KuK date back to the years before the group was formed, during which time its theoretical and practical foundations were laid.



One of the earliest works by the future initiative Art And Struggle (KuK).

The Phase Of Formation, 1982-1985

The autonomist movement usually advertises for demonstrations and events by means of leaflets and posters. The layout for these is usually not thought out and looks quite random. But they do possess certain aesthetic elements.

The background to this are changes in the technical areas of printing and layout. What used to require complicated leaden or photo processing could now be done on paper. Newspapers and posters could now be designed on paper and be ready for printing. Great experience and technical training was no longer necessary. Anyone could produce something. The realm of possibilities was made even greater with the introduction of photocopy technology. Duplicating, enlarging, and reducing were no longer a problem. The possibilities open to everyone led to a number of creative experiments and changes in aesthetic outlook.

Punk Aesthetics

Within the autonomist scene, new printing technologies were quickly utilized. For publications "for and from the movement", a notion particularly adopted by the autonomist magazine 'radikal', these new technologies were ideal. From the early 1980s, 'radikal' became a sort of model for many autonomist publications in the way it was designed and presented.

The esthetics mentioned here corresponded in many ways to those of the punk movement from the 1970s in England, a movement whose music and fashion were an expression of anti-society attitude. Punk arose from the background of the exclusion and lack of perspective of unemployed youths. The motto "No Future" turned youths from a bleak situation into an offensive attack on the capitalist social system. Because "No Future" was not meant to apply to the individual's situation. The message was: If there's no future for us, then there shouldn't be a future for the system!

The punk movement started out in a political context. Breaking with conventions meant standing up against the social situation. But punk was also a cultural innovation, a self-created point of identification. The esthetics of punk turned everything upside down. It wasn't only the music,

texts, and appearances which were wild, it was also the creation of fanzines (photocopied scene publications with small printruns) and record covers

In Germany, punk became a broad movement in the early 1980s. But the social conditions were different from those in Great Britain. The rejection of the capitalist system in Germany was based less on economic desperation or poverty and more on politics – even if things weren't always thought out very much. From the beginning, the autonomist movement and the punks were very closely tied. The boundaries between the two often overlapped. In particular German Punk, punk music with German lyrics, gave rise to a new political music movement in Germany.

Resistance Aesthetics

The creation of posters usually comes about by coincidence. The autonomist scene usually doesn't dwell upon the relationship between art and resistance. Only in the field of literature does this happen to some degree. The KuK initiative, therefore, was opening up new ground and remains unique.

The first thoughts on the project came from discussions about the inaccessibility of the content

Flyer for an antinuclear demonstration in Schacht Konrad near Salzgitter, October 1982.



of many posters. Usually the designs showed what the action was directed against. For example, posters for an anti-fascist demonstration would show images of a Nazi march. The image usually portrayed a strong opponent. This is a fundamental mistake, because the design of a poster is of great importance, and it must be an expression of the action, even in the absence of text. Especially with some sort of anti- action, it must be the resistance which is pictured in order to mobilize for the action. Showing a strong and seemingly invincible enemy is counter-productive.

KuK is primarily interested in giving a visual representation of the resistance. Many things printed in publications from the autonomist scene are just images taken from somewhere else, although arranged somewhat differently. There are very few attempts to create our own expression.

A Concrete Example

Some of the fundamental principles for the later KuK initiative can be illustrated by the discussions and experiences of a small, local group which existed from 1978 to 1985: On October 23, 1982, the Bad Lauterberg Anti-Fascist Working Group called for a demonstration against the annual meeting in Bad Lauterberg of "former overseas troops". The reason for this meeting is a memorial in the city in honor of the former German colonialist murderer and governor of "German East Africa", Herrmann von Wissmann. The poster printed for this demo (see page 66 of the German edition) reproduced the motif of the colonialist monument, with the difference being that the original two-meter high bronze plaque shows a German soldier on a rock while the poster shows him standing over a murdered African. The background image on the poster was the flag of the 'Reichskriegerbundes' and the flag of this group during the Nazi period. Both of these fascist organizations were predecessors of the present day 'Kolonialtruppenverbandes', or Union of Colonial Troops.

Apart from the very unclear message being given by this poster, its design in general contradicts everything which KuK would later come to represent.

The image reproduces the form of the enemy. In a different time or place, the poster could be utilized for very different ends. There is no representation of the resistance in the image at all, in fact all that is shown is a seemingly all powerful super human being.

But the poster is part of the action, so the intention is clear. In fact, the poster doesn't even mention the time or place of the demonstration.

The action was propagated by word of mouth, because the city of Bad Lauterberg wanted to ban the demonstration and this would have to be challenged in court. Authorities and police prepared for all contingencies.

In conjunction with this poster, authorities opened investigations into "illegal postering and vandalism", accompanied by a media smear campaign against antifascists in Bad Lauterberg. Hence the small demonstration of some 100 people was accompanied by shouts and insults from the local population. But it did get things rolling.

In the following years, activities against the annual meeting of the 'Kolonialtruppenverbandes' were continued. In addition to publicity work such as leaflets and events, unknown persons carried out direct actions against the meeting. One such action was a bomb scare which caused a great disruption to the fascist meeting in 1985.

The Characteristic

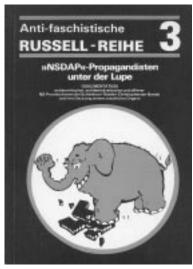
In conjunction with the incomprehensible nature of the mobilization poster in Bad Lauterberg in 1982,

discussions began concerning poster design in general. Next came thoughts on creating original symbolism. The Anti-Fascist Working Group was neither communist nor anarchist, nor did it arise from the tradition of some other organization. So it needed to develop an original symbol. So an image of a local variety of pine tree, with outstretched arms and destroying a swastika, and a clenched left fist, was made (see page 63 of the

German edition). The figure was almost like a image from a comic book, a typical fashion of that time in the early 1980s. At that time, political comic books were popular in the leftist scene. The most famous ones were by Gerhard Seyfried, whose drawings, particularly the little anarchist figure with the worn out black cap, were used everywhere. Other political symbols were used

as well in this type of drawing. For





The use of comic figures as political symbols was characteristic of the 1980s.

Poster against the colonial troops' meeting.

Kolonialtruppen treffen IN LAUTERBERG UND ANDERSWO Antifaschistischer Arbeitskreis Bad Lauterberg example, for its series of anti-fascist books (the

Kein

Frankfurter Rundschau, October 25, 1982: "Exactly 98 demonstrators according to police figures protested over the weekend in **Bad Lauterberg** in Harz against this year's meeting of the 'Traditionsverbandes ehemaliger Schutz- und Über-

seetruppen'. Around 1.000 onlookers watched as police escorted the march through the streets of this small city, ending at the colonial soldiers' memorial where demonstrators placed a wreath to remember the victims of German colonialism in Africa and Asia. By that night, the wreath had already been destroyed by unknown persons."

Russell series), the KB utilized a red elephant with its trunk rolled up into a fist smashing a swastika; the sun image used by the anti-nuclear movement is another good example (see page 65 of the German edition).

An Idea Is Born

In the following years, the themes of resistance and art, original form and esthetics were dealt with further. A time of discussions, experiments, and searching began. At the center of this arose the idea to create a direct connection between resistance and art. Not art in the service of the movement,

rather an equal partnership. That can only be achieved when people from the movement take it upon themselves to create a notion of art and develop it. The role of professional artists is made redundant by the fusion of art and struggle. Groups from the resistance make use of their own notion of art, not seeking to take over galleries, but rather to develop the resistance. This idea stresses the collective and is only possible in conjunction with a fighting movement.

The Movement Needs A Symbol

A series of posters and oil paintings were created which placed the resistance in the foreground and which drew ever nearer to the content conception of KuK. The most significant development during this period was the re-design of the historical symbol of 'Antifaschistische Aktion', Anti-Fascist Action. From the beginning of the 1980s, the issue of which symbol to use had been a problem. At first, people unconsciously began to use the Anti-Fascist Action symbol adopted by the K-groups. This design dates back to 1932. In July of that year, the KPD initiated the organization 'Einheitsfront Aktion', United Front Action. In doing so, the KPD distanced itself from social-fascism theory, which had made the SPD the main enemy and not the fascists. Joint action by the KPD, SPD, and unorganized persons was needed to combat the threat of fascism. This united front politics was separate from the doctrines of class struggle, as an effort was made to have small business owners and other bourgeois classes take part in this political initiative. But a united front is different from a 'Volksfront', or popular front. A United Front seeks to join leftist workers' parties together and to



thereby reach politically conscious people. Even though class struggle is not primary for the united front, its political orientation is still directed against the capitalist system. A popular front does not make this distinction, rather it aims to gather together all forces which oppose fascism.

The 'Einheitsfront Aktion' soon changed its name to 'Antifaschistische Aktion'. Anti-Fascist Action was not an organization, rather it was an action coalition. It was based on the idea of practical cooperation. It was not possible to become a member of 'Antifaschistische Aktion', it was only possible to actively help shape it.

The emblem of 'Antifaschistische Aktion' was used by the K-groups in the 1970s and later by the autonomists. Its historical background was largely unknown to most people. The symbol was adopted because it was clearly different from the symbol of the VVN/BdA and because it represented militant praxis.

The original emblem featured two red flags inside a red circle. The flags symbolized the KPD and the SPD, and the circle represented a ring of salvation. The flags flew from right to left. This direction was meant to indicate that they were blowing in a "leftist" wind. In the 1970s, the flags, which seemed to be hanging very tightly on their poles, were replaced by two more contemporary and fluid looking ones. In the formative years of KuK, the discussions surrounding this symbol played an important role. Some of the thoughts behind the creation of this symbol were relevant to the anti-fascist movement of the 1980s. But the symbol was still not widely used. Autonomists did not see themselves as part of the KPD tradition, nor did they wish to join forces with the SPD. So they created emblems which displayed a red and a black flag, representing the communist and anarchist tendencies within the autonomist movement. The red flag was the historical connection to the anti-fascist resistance struggle during the Weimar Republic and the Nazi period. Also, the flags were turned around and made a bit more slanted. This gave the image a more offensive character. The movement of direction was from left to right. The imaginary masses of people under the flags are advancing against the right. In the beginning, two versions - red flag in front of a black flag, black flag in front of a red flag - were used. After 1987, KuK used the version with a red flag in front of a black flag.

Historical Ties

As the detailed discussions of the 'Antifaschistische Aktion' emblem indicate, KuK interprets itself as part of an historical process.

This does not mean linking to outdated concepts or continuing their traditions. The struggles of the past only have a limited significance to those here and now, and direct lines of connection can hardly be drawn to them. The differences in social conditions are far too great. Even the content and aims of past movements are seldom transferrable to today's world. For KuK, there is no direct line of tradition, but there were points of emancipatory character within past movements. KuK does not speak of a onedimensional continuity, but it does interpret itself in the context of history. The earliest points of reference for KuK are the time of the Reformation and the Peasants' Wars from 1524 to 1526.

Codified Language

KuK works on the intention of utilizing forms of speech which are generally understandable, not concentrating on one concrete theme, but rather going beyond that to display complex associations. So KuK often works with symbols and visible metaphors. These images and forms of colors and symbols are referred to as codified language.

Resistance Culture Or Socialist Realism

One point of reference is the art during the formative years of the Soviet Union. For the first time ever, art was developed in the wake of a successful proletarian revolution. A whole series of new experiments and theories were created. The poster became a decisive medium in the early years of the USSR. Because a majority of the population couldn't read or write, posters were used in all sectors of social life.

An examination of this phase of history was very important for KuK, in particular the contrasts between the traditional and realist forms of some artist groups and the new, more abstract works by tendencies such as the constructivists.

This phase of free leftist art creation in the Soviet Union lasted for only a few years. Avant garde experimentation was soon banned and a "realistic" form of art known as "socialist realism" was created. KuK does not draw any points of reference from socialist realism. In socialist realism, the functionalization of art is driven to the extreme. This is a form of art in the service of the state, not resistance art.

The Revolutionary Art Movement During The Weimar Republic

The November 1918 revolution in the German Empire was accompanied by a whole series of The historic emblem of Anti-Fascist Action from the year 1932 and the new version of autonomist antifascists in the 1980s.

Call to defend the Soviet Union, by Wictor Deni, Moscow, 1920.

This poster (right side) was part of a hygiene campaign, warning people to be aware of germs and bacteria. By an unknown artist in Charkow, 1920.

In the early years of the Soviet Union, posters were an important medium, since much of the population was illiterate.



revolutionary artistic approaches. In 1918, groups like the November Group and the Workers' Council For Art were formed.

In 1924, the 'Rote Gruppe', or Red Group, Germany's first communist artists' association, was formed.

The Red Group's members saw themselves as communists first and artists second. They viewed themselves as "tools...in the service of the class struggle" ('Rote Fahne', No.55/1924). Some of the leading members of the Red Group were George Grosz and John Heartfield. To describe the "proletarian culture" which was being created, the KPD came up with term 'Kampfkultur', the culture of struggle.

One of the most important texts from this era was "Art Is In Danger", an attempt to bring various thoughts on political art together.

"...Make paintings useful. To whom the revolutionary task of the working class is not mere speech or 'a nice idea, but it will never succeed', that person cannot be content with working towards it harmlessly or without form. We must seek to lend expression to the fighting ideas of the workers, and the value of this work lies in its social utility and effect, not on uncontrollable subjective principles of art or commercial success..." (George Grosz and Wieland Herzfelde, 'Die Kunst ist in Gefahr. Ein Orientierungsversuch', 1925)

Political art groups fell apart almost as quickly as they were formed. In 1927, the 11th congress of the KPD in the city of Essen decided to form a "red cultural front". Following that, in March 1928, the Association of Revolutionary Graphic Artists in Germany (ARBKD) was established in Berlin; its name was changed to the Union of Revolutionary Graphic Artists in Germany (BRBKD) in 1931. The ARBKD became a mass organization which propagated a



political art of class struggle under the slogan "Art Is A Weapon". It began a broad cultural campaign with exhibitions and other actions.

For the first time in German history, a revolutionary art movement had been established, which agitated in conjunction with a political movement. Its activists were arrested during the first wave of repression by the Nazis in 1933 and taken away to concentration camps. Their art was branded "degrading".

Although the approaches which were begun in the 1920s were fundamental, they were still deficient:

By seeking to functionalize art, the notion of art becomes reduced to propaganda.

In contrast to this, KuK interprets art as a function which is not subordinate to politics.



A Hamburg docker, by Heinrich Vogeler, 1928. This painting was created for the 5th anniversary of the Hamburg rebellion of 1923.

Chapter VIII

The search for discovery



KuK's examination of the history of revolutionary movements and their art soon led to corresponding discussions about contemporary leftist art and art interpretation. At the end of 1986, a 30-page text entitled "The Search For Discovery" spelled out the theoretical foundations and theses of KuK. A few copies of this text were circulated as photocopies. The text was meant to agitate within the autonomist scene. The following is a summary of the text's main points, slightly re-edited.

The Search For Discovery

The individual is not the center of the world, rather it is the joint collective process which is important. KuK's works come about almost exclusively as part of political campaigns and they are a part of these campaigns. Therefore "Art And Struggle" is not just a name, it's a program for action.

Coming Into Being

In its first years, KuK produced works with techniques which nearly everyone had at their disposal: photocopies and hand printing, although these only allowed for small quantities to be produced. The important thing was that they could be copied easily. Hand printing played a major role during this phase, but this process makes it possible to produce color posters of a fairly good quality. Some KuK posters were made by offset printing, too, however. The eventual change from hand printing to offset printing made it possible to produce much larger numbers in a shorter period of time. Offset printing also made it possible to reproduce photographic images with a lot less difficulty than with hand printing. Some posters were initially printed by hand and later redone with offset printing. But we never fully abandoned hand printing. To make things easier, and to resolve some complicated technical problems, KuK eventually began to make greater use of computer technology.

Why Poster Art?

The poster is a medium of political art which was adopted by the autonomist movement and the

left-radical scene in Germany, in addition to music and original forms of literature. Forms of artistic expression such as paintings, sculpture, and so on have not played a significant role in the left in Germany. There are a variety of reasons for this, but this text won't bother getting into them. When an approach is taken in conjunction with a political struggle, and not with the aim of reaching a specialized audience, the poster provides the perfect medium. Most of the posters from the political scene are not art, however, in terms of how they are conceived of and produced. KuK approaches posters in a different way, however, and views art as a social task. This makes KuK more than mere agitation.

KuK Posters

KuK posters follow certain principles, which are largely adhered to in every work. These are:

- 1. Posters are created in conjunction with a political movement, initiative, or action.
- 2. Illustrations on the posters use generally recognizable symbolism.
- 3. Posters don't display political facts, rather they display and propagate the resistance.
- 4. Even without any text, the political context of the posters must be easily recognizable and speak for themselves. That means they are a sort of visual history which utilize the corresponding codified language. The main ideas behind KuK posters should be understandable by people who have nothing to do with politics. The posters are designed in such a way that even in later years they represent the dimensions of a political action and the political conditions.
- The posters don't simply display images related to the immediate political event at hand, rather they seek to give a general picture of social and political events.
- 6. In creating the poster, an attempt is made to tie the principles of the agitational effects of a poster with those of a work of art.
- 7. The technical production of the poster is done with great care and exactness.

Is There Such A Thing As Art?

In the modern capitalist society, art is defined as something which can be sold.

In contrast to this, KuK follows an understanding of art which views art as an important human medium, not a rational principle.

Art is not bound to any one form. The problem of painting something is not solved by representing it in a naturalistic or abstract manner, rather to present it in such a way that it awakens corresponding emotions in people. Art interprets perceptions and expresses them!

Mastering the medium of art implies that that which is to be represented artistically can be understood as an emotion. Consequently, art means understanding things and associations in and of themselves. So artists can only represent those things by means of art which they themselves (to some degree) understand or experience.

Revolutionary Art

Art means creating consciousness, developing contradictions, pointing out problems, provoking solutions. Art means intervening in individual and social processes and seeking to clarify them. This is what separates art from propaganda. Propaganda and product advertising try to do the opposite: eliminate contradictions, stifle consciousness, hide the facts, provide simple solutions, urge people to buy, urge people not to think.

The Revolution Is Culturally Able

Revolution means more than "just" changing the form of the state or just changing the economic power relations. Revolution means complete social change, it means replacing old values, morals, and cultural proposals with new and more progressive ones. A process of consciousness and feeling is a basic precondition for changing the economic power structure – and vice versa.

The one cannot be separated from the other. The ruling powers cannot be defeated without people first interpreting the world in a different way and adopting a new feeling towards life, morality, and culture.

Even more so: Without the feeling and knowledge of a better world, individual people cannot even begin to imaging making the necessary sacrifices and facing the consequences of a "revolutionary" struggle.

To formulate that in a more positive manner, the struggle for a new society would be completely empty and pointless if, during this process, there did not already exist a feeling of life and a way of life by which people could overcome the old norms.

A revolutionary change of the society does not begin with the destruction of the old power structure, rather the path to this is part of the process.

Collectivism, therefore, is the driving force behind all revolutionary practice.

What Does "Culturally Able" Mean?

In order to attack the old order and to question it, we first need to have some alternatives for a new society. These alternatives must encompass all sectors of the society and provide realistic perspectives. A movement which cannot offer such comprehensive perspectives and the fundamental change of the entire existing power structure cannot be revolutionary.

Such a movement is either a single-issue struggle to achieve a certain goal, and is by definition reformist.

Or it struggles for the privileges of a certain social group, and therefore represents certain interests and eventually sets out on a reformist path or degenerates into an elevated elitist group. Or it fans the fires now and then by means of political confrontation and becomes a football for established reformist politicians because it lacks a continuity of struggle and an encompassing theoretical analysis.

It doesn't matter how radical the struggle is. Radicalism alone does not imply a revolutionary content.

It is of great significance how the people and groups taking part in such a confrontation view themselves, either to what degree their external appearance differs from the norm or how deeply rooted they are in their theories.

A movement which fails to understand all social events as a whole wanders ideologically more and more to the path of the old society.

Revolutionary Action Is Oriented At The Development Of A Total Social Perspective

Revolutionary action embodies a critique of the society as a whole, its questions and perspectives, even if it is only aimed at one issue during a concrete case.

Nothing would be more foolish than to become lost is theory and follow a politics which has nothing to do with people and their living conditions, and which is therefore not concerned with being anchored or understood. In the present situation, it's not important to find a final scientific proof as to whether communism or anarchism represents the ultimate truth. Of course that doesn't mean that we should abandon theoretical foundations or social utopias.

Chapter IX

The KuK symbols

When KuK was founded in 1986, so was KuK's logo. It is a visual representation of the content of the KuK initiative.

Ideas for the symbol were developed at the time when the text "The Search For Discovery" was conceptionalized.

The new logo should represent elements of conscious political praxis, militancy, and autonomist politics. It should also show the contradiction between the creative moment and the semi-legal situation. Also, the symbol should have a relatively simple form and be easy to reproduce.

After a number of attempts, a drawing dating back to some hand prints in 1982 was adopted. All sorts of designs were used back then for printing t-shirts and patches. One figure was created on paper, but never used, and eventually forgotten. For some reason it was kept around, and by coincidence it became the basis for the new KuK logo.

The Symbolism

The KuK symbol is black and white. Both of these "colors" exhibit a great contrast, but in physics they aren't really colors at all because they aren't found in the spectrum of natural light. The extreme contrast, therefore, is presented by "colors" which aren't really colors at all. Black and white represent darkness and light, night and day, positive and negative.

Contrast is taken to represent contradiction. The sharper the contrast, the greater the contradiction. This is in line with KuK's notion that "in contradiction there hides creative potential". The KuK logo represents the principle of contradiction. The figure is comprised of alternations between black and white.

The background of the symbol is a triangle, which gives the sense of two components supported by a third. Contradiction is not passive, rather it creates consciousness. A triangle, therefore, is a symbol of direction, pointing the figure upwards. On the edge of the point of the triangle there is a five-point star. The star does not disrupt the triangle's edge, rather it is a part of it. The star also represents a symbol of the leftist

resistance. The color of this star is of no political significance.

The triangular edge could be seen as ideological confinement. The static geometry is clearly broken by the protruding left elbow. The figure itself is the symbol of consciousness. The use of the triangle and the broken geometry represent the rejection of dogmatism. The figure is seated upright and cross-legged. In this way it imitates the triangular form and seems concentrated. This impression is heightened by the center line. The arms are also

based around the center line. The figure is holding some type of cloud with a triangle and an eye in its left hand, a symbol for consciousness. The figure has its consciousness in its own hand. The pistol in the right hand represents that consciousness alone is not enough. Sometimes practical intervention is needed to constructively influence social events.

The face of the figure is hidden by a mask, or has become a sort of mask. The form and the black and white color of this mask bring to mind classical theater masks. The masked face represents the half-legal conditions under which KuK operates.

The KuK logo was featured on all KuK works after 1988. It was also produced as a patch. In 1991, 500 pins and 150 pendants were made as well. The pins were silver and black, but 50 were done in gold color. These golden pins were given away over the years at various events.

The Fish

In addition to the KuK logo, many works feature the image of a fish. The fish dates back to the days of the Peasants' Wars and represents that the struggle for a progressive society is part of a historical process.

Astrologers envisioned that the end of the world would come in 1525 under the constellation of Pisces. Utilizing the printing methods of that time period, some comrades decided to market this prophecy to the people.

In the year 1523 alone, 150 different books and publications were produced in Germany about this prophecy. One of these was the The sketch which later became the KuK logo.

'For Everything', oil painting, 60 x 80 cm, KuK July, 1991.



'Practica' by Hieronymus Höltzel, published in Nürnberg. The woodcut image which illustrated this text interpreted the prophesied flood as a coming popular uprising.

A storm is shown above the heads of the Emperor and Pope, the cardinals and bishops. There is also a star which is guiding a mob of peasants. The peasants are armed with scythes, swords, and pitchforks. Their warlike intentions are made clearer by the flag which is leading them. Although the flag lacks any symbol, a drummer and piper are clearly leading the group into battle. The flood, therefore, is taken to be an uprising by the lower classes against the feudal lords and the clerics. In June 1524, the great Peasants' War broke out in the German Empire.

In 1991, a new interpretation of this Middle Ages design called "For Everything!" (see page 161

of the German edition) was made. A huge blue fish, with a look of fighting determination, is bursting out of a wall of flames into a bleak, grey landscape. The fish has its animal-like teeth bared. Its fins seem to be turning into a clenched fist, reaching towards the flames. Instead of a Biblical flood which will drown the old order, this drawing is based on a sea of flames. Fire is an age old symbol representing the light of freedom.

In the historical workers' movement, it was a metaphor of the struggle for socialism. The fire of revolution would engulf the old world in flames. In line with this, a red flag seems to be waving within the sea of flames.

In the center of the fire, some people are pictured. There is not a mass of people advancing on the old order, rather it seems to just be a group of three people. They are wearing green military jackets and black ski masks. Their determination is represented by the weapon which the leading figure is clasping in both hands. The figure pointing in the direction of the deadened landscape also seems calm and not shocked. A number of images seem to be shining in the sky above the fish.

But the forewarning constellation plays no role any longer. It is hinted at by the moon and stars in the night sky. The other symbols, which seem to spring forth from the fish, are the symbols for male and female as well as a human form. The human figure represents the new type of person, which still needs to be created. The old order on the right side of image is devoid of people. Grey and bleak, this world seems almost uninhabitable.

There are three big industrial smoke stacks in the background, sending out clouds of smoke into the sky. The gasses plunge both the sky and earth into darkness. Dead trees dot the landscape. On the right edge, a gigantic cement building reaches up into the heavens.

The 'Practica' by Hieronymus Höltzel, woodcut, Nürnberg, 1523.



Chapter X

Criminalization of KuK



State repression against KuK began immediately after the initiative was founded. What's significant, however, is the continuity of this repression over the years. The highpoint came during the investigations against Autonome Antifa (M) in Göttingen.

Criminal authorities in Lower Saxony established a special investigating team (SOKO) in October 1991 specifically to go after KuK. This commission made use of the files which had been gathered by police and the federal intelligence agency since 1988. A degree of state investigation unique in Germany was thus begun.

Police authorities began collecting all posters, flyers, brochures, etc. which featured the KuK logo. Every single poster was analyzed. The SOKO drew up a table of data on all the posters, broken down as follows: name of the poster, approximate date of publication, does it display the Anti-Fascist Action logo?, does it display the KuK logo?, imprint, other elements, slogans, and other observations.

Everything was looked at in great detail, even chemical analyses were done, because imprints contains certain types of ink. By November 1994, the police had analyzed 51 works printed by KuK and cataloged them in separated investigative files.

Of particular interest to the authorities was the poster "Fight The Class Justice System!", produced in May 1993 for a public discussion event featuring former RAF prisoners. The event was observed by the police, but authorities had no grounds for criminalizing it. But in the end the state decided to use the poster for the event as an excuse to launch a Paragraph 129a investigation, "support for a terrorist organization". Authorities declared that KuK was a support organization (the propaganda wing) for Autonome Antifa (M). This made certain legal technicalities unnecessary. By claiming the group was supporting a terrorist organization, it made it easier to launch a comprehensive surveillance campaign against Autonome Antifa (M).

But the state's investigations of KuK went well beyond analyzing the printed works. One example is the surveillance which was done during work on an oil painting entitled "The M Concept". In July 1993, an artist put up an easel on the Rote Strasse in Göttingen for several days and painted a street lantern. Soon thereafter, the political police sprang into action and began their observations. A look at police files later on revealed notes describing the artist as a KuK activist.

After more than two years of intensive investigations, 35 house raids were carried out by the police in July 1994. Police confiscated several boxes full of materials. Hundreds of posters featuring the KuK logo were taken into custody. Even an oil painting depicting a riot from the 1920s or 1930s was taken away by the police. Costumes for agit-prop actions, like fake weapons and police uniforms, were also confiscated.

The Court's Decision

A federal court ruled on August 4, 1995 to allow charges to be filed under Paragraph 129. The charges under 129a were dropped. The court's

decision showed that the poster "Fight The Class **Justice** System!" and the brochure "Banned Art" did not fulfill the requirements for a crime under Paragraph 129a. But the poster "Stop State Terrorism -Fight Back!" was still under investigation. Authorities tried to say that this work was a call for people to commit crimes (riot and assault). Only when the entire case was brought to a close on September 16,

Federal prosecutors banned the flyer "Banned Art – Banned".

Beglaubitete Ablichtung

DER GENERALBUNDESANWALT
BEIM BUNDESCARUCHTStoff
2. BJs. 24/95

| Description of the Armonic organisms organisms organisms of the Armonic organisms

A KuK activist in a mask of Interior Minister Zimmermann (CSU) during an anti-fascist action in Essel, November 17, 1985. Photo: Rainer Recke



1996 was the criminalization of this poster abandoned.

Notable State Intelligence Actions Against KuK

1985: Criminalization of the sketch "Preparing For The Struggle". Reason: inciting criminal activity and insulting the state and its symbols. Legal measures are taken against a poster and a flyer.

1986: On the evening of December 1, 1986, riot police surround the JuZI youth center in Göttingen and raid it. An oil painting entitled "The Indirect Perspective" and an easel are confiscated by police.

1988: The poster "We Fight The Fascists – Let's Organize The Struggle Ourselves!", part of the mobilization for the demonstration against the FAP center in Mackenrode near Göttingen on May 7, 1988, and the poster "All Will Fall", part of the mobilization against the annual militarist and revisionist meeting in Göttingen on September 9, 1988, are investigated. The reason: Paragraph 303, inciting criminal activity. The first poster is also being investigated by police at the request of two fascists, Karl Polacek (FAP) and Hans-Michael Fiedler (NPD). Both feel they have been insulted by being called "fascists".

1989: The poster "Sabotage The Elections", created in conjunction with the 1989 elections for the European Parliament, is confiscated during a postering action in Hamburg. It is investigated as an incitement to criminal activity.

1990/91: During an agit-prop action on October 2, 1990, the evening before Germany's "reunification", thousands of imitation 100 mark bills are distributed on the Marktplatz in Göttingen. A Neanderthal and a banana are pictured on the bills. Authorities open an investigation into counterfeiting.

1992: It goes without saying that KuK was observed by the 'Verfassungsschutz', the Office for

the Protection of the Constitution. In various state intelligence reports, KuK posters are featured. The chapter on the 'Autonomen' in Lower Saxony's annual intelligence report for the year 1991 featured the following: "Several initiatives in Göttingen formed around the issue of 'anti-fascist struggle'. These are closely linked to the 'Initiative Art And Struggle' (KuK)." An agit-prop action on October 2, 1992 was investigated on charges of insulting the police.

1993: In July, police agents observe the making of an oil painting in Göttingen. Following a TV report on a KuK exhibition in August, state police attempt to confiscate all of the video material from the journalist who produced the piece.

1994: During major raids against the Autonome Antifa (M) in early July, authorities are especially interested in KuK materials. Posters, postcards, oil paintings, and other works are confiscated. The poster "Fight The Class Justice System!" is investigated under Paragraph 129a, support for a terrorist organization.

1995: In January 1995, the brochure for the exhibition 'Verbotene Kunst' (Banned Art) is criminalized. The brochure is alleged to show "support for a terrorist organization". In May, two anti-fascists involved in the trial against Autonome Antifa (M) are charged with being the sole members of the KuK initiative.

1996: The poster "Stop State Terrorism – Fight Back!" is charged for inciting criminal activity, namely riot and assault. On September 16, 1996, the charges against Autonome Antifa (M), and KuK, are dropped.

1997/1998: The travelling exhibition "Banned Art", which has been on the road through Germany since 1995, is regularly observed by plainclothes police and intelligence agents.



Hanging up KuK posters, 1989.

Chapter XI

Surveillance while painting



It's not only KuK posters that face criminalization, oil paintings as well get destroyed, confiscated, and observed by police. On the evening of December 1, 1986, riot police surrounded and raided the JuZI youth center in Göttingen. The reason for the police action was a meeting taking place in response to the eviction of three squatted houses earlier that day. Around 400 people in the youth center had their ID cards checked by the cops. Police also destroyed several works by KuK which were still being exhibited in the building. The back of the oil painting "Indirect Perspective" (see page 167 of the German edition) was used as a backdrop for photographing suspects. In the end, one policeman took the painting and the easel away.

In January 1987, a claim was filed against the state of Lower Saxony for damages to the painting. "It seems that the claimant will not be satisfied with the explanation that it's impossible to determine which officers were responsible for the confiscation. For one thing, that is difficult to believe, and secondly, that does not in any way alter the duty of the state to pay compensation, because the damage could only have been caused by the police." (letter from lawyer Ahrens to the Göttingen city council, January 7, 1987)

After a lot of legal wrangling, the city government decided that a court case could end in an embarrassing defeat. They agreed to reach a settlement at the end of 1989. In compensation for the damaged painting, the city paid 2,500 German marks, in addition to lawyers' fees. After this, the court suit was dropped in January 1990.

Oil Painting Observations

Since 1992, an artist had been working on an oil painting entitled "The M Concept". The painting features a number of different elements, all of them related to the political concept of the Autonome Antifa (M), for example the New Year's demonstration in 1991/92. In order to emphasize certain episodes, many details and portraits are featured in the painting. So in one scene, where neo-Nazis are being chased off by autonomist antifascists, a lantern is of great significance.

One such lantern is located in Göttingen on a small square in the Rote Strasse, where the incident took place. In order to preserve the authenticity, the lantern and the details on the buildings were painted while standing on the Rote Strasse itself.

In June and July 1993, the artist was busy for several weeks in the Rote Strasse. This was not only of interest to passers by, but also to police. Written notes by an officer of the state political police gave a detailed description of his observations of the artist at work.

The painting ritual in the Rote Strasse developed into a sort of spectacle, with a TV crew visiting the scene and a KuK exhibition being organized nearby. When a TV journalist asked police if they had any comment concerning the works by KuK, state police from Lower Saxony sprung into action, seeking precise details about the planned exhibition. Afterwards, state police tried to confiscate all of the journalist's video materials.

Confiscations

During the raids in July 1994, one KuK oil painting of a riot from the 1920s or 1930s was confiscated. Because this painting was displayed during several actions, it was used as evidence to try and prove that certain individuals were members of KuK.

Painting "The M Concept" on the streets in downtown Göttingen. Photo: Bernward Comes





Detail from the oil painting "The M-Concept", KuK 1994–1997.

Chapter XII

The exhibitions of KuK



In order to propagate the ideas of KuK and to go on the offensive against the state's attempts at criminalization, the first exhibitions of KuK works were organized as early as 1986/87. Small catalogs were produced for these exhibitions and editions of 200 or so copies were distributed as photocopies.

The first KuK exhibition was from November 24-29, 1986 in the Youth Center in downtown Göttingen.

From this initiative came the exhibition "Images From The Resistance", which ran from March 1-15, 1987 in the 'Ex', a cafe in Mehringhof in Berlin. This same exhibition was also shown in 'Cafe Klatsch' in Wiesbaden.

The "Art As Resistance" Exhibition, 1990-1992 After 1988, when a whole series of KuK posters were criminalized, the idea arose to come up with a new exhibition concept. The aim would be to heighten awareness about the repression against the anti-fascist resistance and to organize solidarity

for those affected by it. By this time, new people had joined KuK, and the content of the exhibition was expanded. The new concept was to be partly historical and would feature posters from all fields of resistance in the autonomist movement. Research for this exhibition lasted into 1991, and new parts were continually added to the exhibition. But it became clear that a project in which all aspects of resistance are represented by posters would remain deficient. It was often difficult to still find many posters which were more than two or three years old. The conceptual approach and the background content which KuK required could not be matched. For most of the posters, there was no other accompanying information available. Still, in the end an exhibition of 34 posters from various fields of resistance was assembled. The exhibition was divided into a historical section and a contemporary section.

In the historical section, art from the resistance to fascism was displayed. The aim was to present



Setting up the "Art As Resistance" exhibition, Kiel, March 1990.



The exhibition "Art As Resistance" on October 9,1994 in Göttingen. the various artistic tendencies and their views. The main focus was on the political DaDa movement from the 1920s, the anti-fascist resistance movement in Germany up until 1945, and German anti-fascist artists living in exile. Eighteen artists were featured, including Lea Grundig, George Grosz, and the brothers Wieland Herzfelde and John Heartfield. The contemporary section featured resistance movements such as anti-fascism, the census boycott, the women's movement, Startbahn West, the anti-nuclear movement, squatting struggles, anti-imperialism and the armed groups, and internationalism. The catalog which was planned to accompany the exhibition was never published, however. The aim of these exhibitions was to offer a comprehensive

KuK motifs were also used by other groups for their own actions. presentation of resistance culture. So, each exhibition was accompanied by a music concert. Sometime the group 'Schwarze Feuer' from Göttingen played. The band 'The Ende' from Hildesheim travelled with the exhibition all across Germany. In 1991, this experiment came to an end because everyone active in the project had reached the end of their strength.

(For the dates and locations of the exhibition "Art As Resistance", 1990-1992, see pages 84-84 of the German edition.)

"Banned Art"

KuK reacted swiftly to the police raids in July 1994. In early November, an exhibition of criminalized posters and oil paintings was put on display in Göttingen. An accompanying brochure entitled 'Verbotene Kunst' was also published. This brochure, "Banned Art", was quickly banned.

Despite being illegal, the posters and brochures continued to be distributed. Parts of old exhibitions also helped give rise to the new project "Banned Art". This exhibition, in addition to a historical section, featured 35 criminalized KuK posters, oil paintings, and actions, and was organized in conjunction with anti-repression events. The opening of this travelling exhibition was in Berlin in 1995.

(For the dates and locations of the exhibition "Banned Art", see page 86 of the German edition.)

An Idea Spreads

It was these exhibitions which helped make the name KuK more known to people. One of the initial goals of the initiative, however, namely for groups from the resistance to make use of KuK's works for their own efforts, found little resonance. Even the attempt to inspire people to act on their own ideas and inspirations had little effect.

It was only with the beginning of an organized approach to anti-fascism in the 1990s that the idea began to spread. Now the KuK logo is being used on posters and stickers in Lower Saxony, Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Berlin, Bremen and Saxony.

Chapter XIII:

The complete list of works by KuK can be found on pages 87–90 of the German edition.

The names of various German organizations and other words often replaced by abbreviations are translated in the English version of the book. See page 91 of the German edition for the correct German spellings of these names.

The full list of recommended German literature can be found on page 92 of the German edition.

Chapter XIV

Descriptions of KuK posters





KuK Concert Posters, 1986–1989

The independent cultural impulses of the autonomist movement in the 1980s were primarily tied to the punk scene. Political bands existed everywhere. A lively sort of political music culture was created, which was separate from the rest of society in its content and type of music. Capitalist notions of profit and quality were ignored. By means of "non-commercial concerts" and "collective forms of living", an attempt was made to create "freespaces" which were not dominated by social pressures.

But this cultural movement lasted only a few years. In the end, this approach, and all of its youthful elan, proved to be naive. A good example of this is one particular individual who was once a punk, but later became an insurance salesman.

The Youth Center (JuZI) Cult

One meeting point for the scene and a concert venue known all across the country was the Downtown Youth Center (JuZI) in Göttingen. The overlap between the autonomist and punk scenes led to the creation of five KuK concert posters:

"Concerti di Antifa", April 5-6, 1986, ca. 150 copies (see left)

"Kur Concert - More Than Just Music And Coma", September 5-6, 1986, ca. 130 copies (see pages 116 and 169 of the German edition)

"Full Bottles Fly Better", part of the Culture Days in the JuZI, November 24-29, 1986, ca. 120 copies (see pages 116 and 170 of the German edition)

"Solidarity Concert For The Detmold Trial", April 18, 1987, ca. 140 copies (see page 171 of the German edition)

"A Concert, Despite Everything...", September 23, 1989, ca. 150 copies (see page 185 of the German edition)

These posters were all printed by hand. Different techniques were used in designing them, for example paper collages. The poster "Full Bottles Fly Better" was designed as a stencil.





Two designs widely used in the 1980s.

A concert by the punk band "Dunkle Tage" (Dark Days) in the JuZI in Göttingen, 1985.



Solidarity poster for the Detmold trial defendants. KuK 1987

Solidarity Poster For The Detmold Trial Defendants

In the years 1985/86, the state struck hard against the 'Distel' bookshop in the city of Detmold. This shop, a political project which existed from 1977 to 1987, was active in counter information and culture work by means of publishing leftist literature.

The Information Event

On October 18, 1985, one part of the 'Distel' collective organized an information event about the situation of political prisoners from the RAF and the resistance. It was purposely organized on the date of the "unsolved" deaths of Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, and Jan-Carl Raspe in Stammheim. About 70 people attended the event.

Because of this event, and a brochure which was produced to document it, authorities opened investigations under Paragraph 129a (support for a terrorist organization).

Raids

On May 14, 1986, at six in the morning, a major police action began. Because of the information event about the prisoners, the 'Distel' bookshop and several private homes were raided and searched by more than a hundred police. In the end, four people were taken into custody. On July 31, 1986, the 'Distel' was raided for a second time, this time because of issue number 132 of the publication 'radikal', which was also under investigation because of Paragraph 129a. Four copies of 'radikal' were confiscated. Following these raids, Christoph von Horen, Holger Deilke, and Ute Hladki, all of whom considered themselves part of the anti-imperialist resistance, were charged. The fourth person, Bernd Uhe, was charged because of his work in the 'Distel' bookshop. He was also charged with working with 'radikal' and for having organized the information event on the political prisoners. The trial on the charges stemming from the information event took place in the spring of 1988. Bernd Uhe was

Sticker in support of a RAF hungerstrike in the early 1980's. Calls for solidarity with the hungerstrikers were criminalized under Paragraph 129a. "Organize the fight against imperialism inside and outside the prison! Put together all anti-imperialist prisoners!"





acquitted. Christoph von Horen made a political demonstration out of his trial. He read a statement to the court claiming to be "part of the joint revolutionary struggle of the guerrilla and the resistance". In October 1988, he began serving a jail sentence of 18 months and 2 weeks. Ute Hladki and Holger Deilke did not appear for trial, and went underground. Warrants were issued for their arrest. Nearly three years later, both were arrested in Husum on December 7, 1989. They were accused of having become part of the RAF's commando structure. During an exercise session while in pre-trial custody in March 1990, Ute Hladki injured her spine and became paralyzed. The charges against her were later dropped.

The Detmold 'radikal' Trial

In December 1987, the State Supreme Court in Düsseldorf began its proceedings against the head of the 'Distel' bookshop. Increased security measures were ordered, so the trial was held in a separate building. All visitors to the trial had to submit to searches beforehand and have their ID cards photocopied. The defendant sat with his back to the court and ignored the proceedings. In the end he was sentenced to 10 months in prison, which was changed to 4 years of probation, and fined 1,000 marks.

The Solidarity Poster

The poster in solidarity with the Detmold trial consisted of three parts, class justice, prison, and the caller. Each part was photocopied to the right size and then all were joined together. The color separation came during the film stage of printing.

(ca. 140 copies; March 1987; see page 171 of the German edition)



"We Chaotic Radicals Have A Long Tradition"

In early 1985, autonomist groups began a discussion around the 100th anniversary of May Day. Opinions about this were very divergent.

Some people fundamentally reject anniversaries and traditions. Many autonomists who hold anarchist positions didn't want anything to do with May Day's historical, communistic class struggle. So the campaign was mainly led by autonomist groups with an interest in the ideas of class struggle. Their goal was to focus on the internationalist character of May Day on its 100th anniversary. In the discussions, May Day's "living character" as a day of struggle, in Latin American in particular, was an important topic. Another goal was to make this date a day of revolutionary struggle in Germany as well.

Fear Of The Factory

Many images were created about the theme of industrial labor in line with May Day's 100th anniversary. Although these didn't play much of a role in the campaign, some scene publications did feature them as illustrations. One of these was the oil painting entitled "Fear Of The Factory" (see page 175 of the German edition).

Win Back May Day!

The events which led to the First of May becoming a day of international struggle date back to 1886. In the USA, the Federation of Organized Trade and Labor Unions decided to launch their major campaign for an 8-hour work day on May 1, 1886. On this date, 350,000 workers in major American cities launched a general strike. The events in Chicago over the next few weeks were especially important. On the evening of May 4, 1886, a bomb went off during a protest rally, killing one policeman. Police then used force against the demonstrators, arresting many workers' leaders. Four of those arrested were sentenced to death and executed in 1887, although there was no proof that they had been involved in the bombing. International labor organizations condemned the verdict as an example of class justice and expressed solidarity with the demands of the murdered workers. Starting in 1889, May 1st became the International Day of Struggle of the Working Class.

The May Day Poster 1986

The first poster design for the May Day campaign showed an outstretched black and white fist with a broken chain around its wrist. The backdrop was a red flag, with a black one behind it (see page 176 of

the German edition). Most groups rejected this design. They criticized the symbolism, saying it looked like a "K-group poster". Such criticism sparked a discussion about the interpretation of the history of resistance, beginning with the Peasants' Wars. These controversies are expressed in the eventual poster design. The date of May 1st was left out of the collage, which thematized the entire history of the resistance.

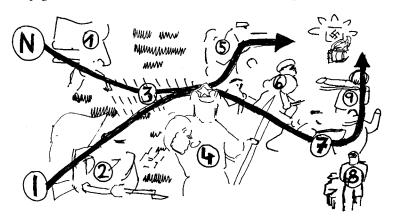
Despite different approaches, several calls went out for May Day. There were even attempts to independent demonstrations. Hamburg, autonomists attempted to organize a bloc within the DGB trade union demo. A few attack communiques mentioned the 100th anniversary of May Day. But all in all, the campaign had very little resonance.

The Historical Collage

This image features the most important epochs in the development of the international class struggle. The concept for the picture had two lines which illustrate the revolutionary resistance and attack the imperialist system. Starting with the Peasants' Wars, the 'N' line showed the national history in the foreground, and the 'I' line began with a motif from the October Revolution in Russia and represented the internationalist character. Both lines meet in the image around the revolutionary struggles in Berlin in 1918. Behind this is a facade of resistance images from various time periods, surrounding imperialism like a snake. A photo from the Vietnam War, a woman Vietnamese guerrilla leading away a captured U.S. bomber pilot, is used as an example of the defeat of the imperialist system. The center of the image features a Red Army soldier from the time of the October Revolution, pointing to the viewer. The slogan above this collage, "We 'Chaoten' Have A Long Tradition", was designed to interpret autonomist groups in an historical context. (first printing 400 copies, second printing 500; April 1986; see pages 116 and 177 of the German edition)

Concept for the painting "We chaotic radicals have a long Tradition".

1 Fryheit – Cover of a leaflet during the peasants, 1522 2 Let's move! Defend the Ural!, 1919, Sowjetunion 3 Armed workers occupy the newspaper quarter in Berlin, January 1919 4 Did you volunteer?, 1920, Sowjetunion 5 Batles in the newspaper quart,1919 6 March Batles, Berlin, 1848 7 Revolt of the spanish against French occupation under Napoleon, 1808-1813, 8 Vietnam War, 1945-1975 -A Pilot of a shot **US-bomber** is captured by a Vietcongcombatant 9 Startbahn West, January 1982



"Repression And Expulsion Are Murder!"

The sharpening of Germany's asylum laws began in 1986/87. It was at this time that phrases like "a flood of refugees" were used by the state to scapegoat asylum seekers. Camps to house refugees were created, and in West Berlin asylum seekers were housed in tents which were often filled beyond their capacity. Social services for refugees were cut back. Asylum proceedings were sped up, making deportation quicker and easier.

Many refugees came to West Germany via the DDR. If a person landed at Schonefeld Airport in East Berlin and said they wanted to seek asylum in West Germany, they were taken immediately to West Berlin.

In 1986, a treaty was signed with East Germany which meant that any foreigners without proper travel documents immediately sent back to their home country.

Decreasing conditions for refugees in Germany was accompanied by a media smear campaign. New catch phrases were created to heat up the mood. Then the first attacks were carried out by fascists on refugee hostels, and far-right parties launched their disgusting campaign of racist propaganda. The DVU gained nationwide recognition with its poster campaign against foreigners. Anti-fascist groups from "northern Germany" initiated a response to this. A poster with the slogan "Repression And Expulsion Are Murder" was designed to be postered over top of the DVU's posters.

Not Mainstream Crap

This anti-fascist poster showed the policies of imperialism as the main reason for hunger and flight. Against these policies were the liberation movements of the Three Continents and the struggle in Germany for the right of refugees to stay in the country. An image of an attack by the Revolutionary Cells (RZ) in 1986 is also featured. The RZ, under the motto "Fight For The Right To Stay For All Refugees And Immigrants – For Free Floods!", carried out attacks on the Hamburg police's Foreigner Division, the State Supreme Court in Lüneburg, the Central Foreigner Registry in Cologne, and the German Red Cross in West Berlin. The poster corresponded to the militant political content of that campaign." In the past few weeks, we carried out a series of actions against institutions which deter or control refugees, which we will document here. ... We don't view these actions as a reaction to the racist propaganda launched by the regime against refugees, accompanied with an arsenal of deterrence measures and expanded into the

moment of pogrom. Nor do we represent the humanitarian, naive approach of the churches, the trade unions, and politically established groups. The state, which is responsible for the violence against refugees, won't be swayed by appeals or resolutions. What's more, such an approach elevates the status of political asylum, allowing for the differentiation and selection of refugees and special treatment. It doesn't matter why people flee to Germany. They are here, and they should be able to stay here. ... The refugee question is not a humanitarian or legalistic question, and it should not be reduced to the issue of 'political asylum'. It is part of the global class struggle and an expression of the contradictions of the global imperialist system, which is bringing forward a new type of proletariat: the mobile, expelled, and uprooted masses of the Third World. ('Revolutionärer Zorn', special edition, October 1986)

Concrete Actions

Campaigns of attack by the RZ and militant initiatives by antifa groups against fascist organizations were only some of the concrete measures taken against sharpened asylum laws and increasing racism. There were other efforts to work together directly with refugees themselves. For example, there were protest actions against the plan to replace cash payments to asylum seekers with special vouchers for buying food.

Bloody Talons

A central poster motif was the eagle, Germany's state symbol, gripping a person laying on the ground with its talons. The emblems of the establishment's political parties were featured in both talons and in the eagle's feathers. The feathers also featured the mastheads of Germany's most important newspapers and magazines, and the catch phrases used in conjunction with their "asylum debate". This poster was used all across Germany and was often confiscated by police.

(2,000 copies; July 1987; see pages 116 and 173 of the German edition)



Police in Bremen confiscate the poster "Repression And Expulsion Are Murder", 1987.

"Attack Organized Neo-Fascism -Fight The Viking Youth!"

Every year in Hetendorf near Celle, the fascist Viking Youth organize an autumn training camp. The Viking Youth were formed in 1952 from various far-right youth organizations and stand in the tradition of the Hitler Youth of the Nazi regime.

The Viking Youth are a hierarchical, disciplined, and elitist organization who appear in public in uniforms. They consider themselves to be part of the "nationalist youth movement" of Europe, so they have international contacts with other like-minded groups, in addition to ties with other neo-fascist organizations in Germany. The main task of the Viking Youth is to educate other "national" ('volkstreu') youth. This education consists of a racist, national ideology and paramilitary training. The Viking Youth generally refrain from the public political scene. That changed in 1985 when the Viking Youth and the ANS/NA linked up to form the 'Volkstreue Ausserparliamentarische Opposition', a national extra-parliamentary opposition or "right-wing APO". But this cooperation only had a limited effect and resulted in very few small actions.

The private property in Hetendorf has an area of more than 7,000 square meters with four large buildings. Various fascist groups make use of these structures. The Viking Youth organize a number of regular events in Hetendorf. The annual autumn camp consists of paramilitary activities together with other neo-Nazi groups.

Brown Pastures

In the 1980s, various far-right groups established themselves in the Luneburg region. For example, Dr. Uwe Jurgens' TENO group located near Celle. This group was one of the largest fascist paramilitary groups in northern Germany, but the public did not seem outraged by its presence in the area. The first anti-fascist actions against TENO were organized by regional groups, with the support of the "northern German" antifas, for example the actions against the 'Stahlhelm' meeting in Celle in June 1982, the attempted blockade of the NPD congress in October 1983 in Fallingbostel, and the demonstrations against the annual "day of national mourning" by old and new fascists at the Soldiers' Cemetery in Essel on November 17, 1984, 1985, and 1986. So the cooperation with the "northern German" antifa groups in 1987 was nothing new. Nor was the outcome of the action. The VVN/BdA pulled out of the meetings preparing for a demonstration against the Viking Youth camp. Instead, they

Wiking-Jugend



A sketch often used for actions against the Viking Youth, 1987.

called for a vigil at the former Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, far away from Hetendorf. The Greens took on most of the organizational formalities for the action in Hetendorf against the Viking Youth camp.

The Anti-Fascist Campaign, 1987

The action against the Viking Youth's autumn camp in Hetendorf was the first of its kind. So a variety of informational events were organized to inform people about the Viking Youth. There were events in 26 cities, mostly in northern Germany. A video about the Viking Youth and their role in the far-right scene was shown. A brochure entitled "Fight The Viking Youth! – Reader On The Public Event By Anti-Fascist Action" was published as well.

On October 1, 1987, this info event was held in the city of Kiel and the names of prominent Viking Youth members were made public. Shortly thereafter, attacks were carried out against four of these fascists, ranging from damaged property to arson. Unknown to the organizers, however, state intelligence agents and some Viking Youth members attended the Kiel event as well. Both the fascists and the police identified the man and the women who publicized the Nazi name list. Authorities in the state of Schleswig-Holstein filed charges against the two anti-fascists, alleging a connection between the public event and the subsequent attacks. These charges, filed in October 1987, were made public in June 1989 in conjunction with the 129a proceedings against autonomist anti-fascists in northern Germany. The woman had her home raided on one occasion by police.



Vehicles and Headquarters of a fascist paramilitary organization TENO, destroyed by an autonomist antifascist commando in December 1984.

A Poster For The Various Events

In order to help mobilize for the info events and the Hetendorf demonstration, a poster entitled "Attack Organized Neo-Fascism – Fight The Viking Youth!" was printed. No date was printed on the poster so that it could be used for various events. The motif was designed by the northern German anti-fascist initiatives which also organized the info events.

Fire And Flames For The Viking Youth

The poster motif was designed to propagate militant actions by anti-fascists and to show the fascists as a defeated and laughable bunch. The backdrop was a photo of the successful firebombing of the headquarters of TENO near Celle. This attack in December 1984 destroyed the garage and several vehicles belonging to the fascists. At the same time, the Viking Youth's autumn camp buildings in Hetendorf burned to the ground as well. Since there were no flames in the original picture of the rubble, they were added into the poster design. Putting together this poster took a lot of work, since computer technology was not available in those days. The difficulty lay in the montage of photographs, which were only available in print form. Eleven individual images had to combined to form the backdrop – a very difficult and time consuming process when creating a film montage for printing.

Hetendorf, October 3, 1987

The mobilizational events for the demonstration against the Viking Youth were well attended, but participation in the action itself was rather lacking. Part of the blame lay with an agreement between the police and the Viking Youth. Police advised the Viking Youth to call off their camp. One day before the demonstration, the media reported that the Viking Youth's autumn camp had been cancelled. This had a negative effect on the antifascist mobilization, and only 400 people arrived at the demo's meeting point. Except for a few Greens, nearly everyone there was from the autonomist scene.

The auto convoy heading for Hetendorf was stopped by riot police on horseback, dog squads, and helicopters on a street outside of the Viking Youth's compound.

It would only be able to proceed if people and cars were searched by police. After a failed attempt to break through the police lines, police tried to mix some undercover agents in among the anti-fascists. But these cops were soon spotted and kicked out. But the auto convoy remained surrounded for some six hours.

Years Later

In 1994, a new campaign of resistance against the Nazi camp in Hetendorf began. Regional groups founded a coalition to organize days of action against the Viking Youth's meeting during the Pentecost holiday in 1995. When Anti-Fascist Action began to take up the campaign, the Viking Youth were banned in November 1994.

When the Viking Youth were banned, the group totalled about 400 members, a number which had remained constant throughout the 1980s. But the banning of the organization did not change the function of the compound in Hetendorf within the neo-Nazi scene. Fascists continued to hold meetings there. So the antifa days of action in 1995 went on as scheduled. A blockade was organized on June 17, 1995. Police responded with repeated baton charges against anti-fascists. In the fall of 1995, a call went out for regular Sunday strolls around the fascist center. Several hundred people took part in these actions, mostly from the autonomist scene. Local residents rarely took part, since the actions were always blocked off by the police. A central event during the week of fascist events in Hetendorf was the Equinox festival on June 20-21, 1996. An antifascist mobilization was organized to counter this. On June 20, a masked black bloc headed to the compound in Hetendorf. But the action was short lived, as riot police tried to surround the demo and check the identities of all those involved. The resulting confrontation left many people injured. Riot and illegal assembly charges were filed against 200 people, but these were eventually dropped in March 1997 in exchange for paying a 200 mark fine to the former concentration camp in Mittelbau-Dora. Anti-fascist actions against Hetendorf continued, however. Calls went out for Sunday strolls and actions against the Nazi center. The highpoint came in 1997 with the actions against the "7th Annual Hetendorf Summer Week". As ever, the police protected the neo-Nazis and went into action against anti-fascists. Cars were searched, materials confiscated, and six people later faced charges. Because a legal rally had been organized, police were forced to allow around 400 anti-fascists within earshot of the compound on the night on June 21, 1997. Loud instruments and whistles disrupted the fascists' Equinox festival. The compound in Hetendorf had become one of the most important meeting centers for fascist activity in Germany. In 1998, the association running the Hetendorf side was banned. All buildings were closed down.

(poster featured on pages 116 and 178 of the German edition; 800 copies; August 1987)

"Stop The Investigations Against Autonomist Anti-Fascists!"

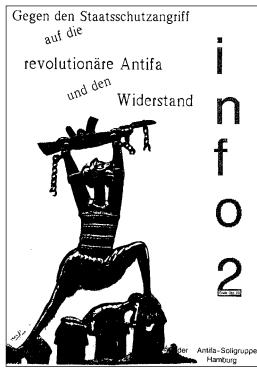
In the night of May 21, 1989, autonomist antifascists carried out a commando action against leading Nazi cadre Christian Worch in Hamburg. Disguised as police officers, a group of anti-fascists burst into Worch's home and handcuffed him and his wife and took away all of his personal files. These papers included detailed information about the neo-Nazi scene in Germany. A short time after, on June 13, 1989, four people were arrested for putting up posters (see page 186 of the German edition) reading "Sabotage The Elections! Make Your Mark And Your Fist Hit The Right Spot!" in Hamburg.

Two people named Burkhard and Renate were among those arrested. Burkhard's car was searched and police confiscated several items, including an audio cassette of notes of surveillance around Worch's home, allegedly in Burkhard's voice. On June 15, six anti-fascists had their homes raided by police in Hamburg. Authorities said it was not only in response to the action against Worch, but was part of a broader 129a investigation. Four of the six anti-fascists targeted by the state were charged with having formed a terrorist association, which "had carried out arson attacks across northern Germany since 1983 against their political opponents and such persons and groups which are seen as representatives of the state which they reject", according to police records. Investigations under Paragraph 129a had been opened since that January, and the group was accused of responsibility for more than 10 attacks. When the police



raided Renate's home, they found personal items which had been taken during commando action on Worch's house on May 20. Burkhard and Renate were then placed into pre-trial custody. After one month of imprison-Burkhard launched a hungerstrike on July 17. In his hungerstrike declaration, he said his action was part of the international imperialist struggle and he demanded better prison conditions. After a judge

bought the assumption that Worch's materials had just been stored by others at Renate's place, both she and Burkhard were released in early August after seven weeks in custody. The Paragraph 129a investigations continued for another year, but the charges never went to trial. Charges against Renate in connection with the commando action on Worch's house were dropped, since witness reports said that no women had been involved in the action. But Burkhard's charges weren't dropped until 1996.



Brochure by the 'Soligruppe' in support of Renate and Burkhard, and about the Paragraph 129a investigations against anti-fascists in northern Germany, 1989.

Double Solidarity Work

The personal and political breaks among the "northern Germans" in 1987, which led to fragmentation and stagnation, reached their highpoint during the solidarity work around the 129a investigations in Hamburg. The schism went right down the middle of the group of defendants, and there was no getting around it. Despite the relative weakness of the anti-fascist movement, joint solidarity work was not possible. The solidarity group which formed after the house raids in Hamburg split after the first edition of 'info' was published. From that point on there was a 'Solidarity group', which continued to publish 'info', and the Antifa Trial Group Hamburg, which published 'Gestreifte Freiheit'. The conflicts between these two groups were played out quite openly in their publications. Anyone looking on from the outside would have been quite bemused. The split had a bad effect on things, it took a long time for information to get published, and no effective support work was organized.

Brochure by the 'Antifa Prozess-gruppe Hamburg' in support of Renate and Burkhard, and about the Paragraph 129a investigations against anti-fascists in northern Germany, 1989.



V.i.S.d.P.: Rudolf Engelhofer, born in 1896, was a seaman during the First World War. In 1918 he joined the Spartacist Union in Munich and later joined the KPD. In the Munich Councilist Republic, in April 1919, Rudolf **Engelhofer was** commander of the Red Army in Bavaria. He was killed by government troops on May 3, 1919.

The black bloc during the Mackenrode demonstration, May 7, 1988. Photos: Rainer Recke

Support From The Exhibition Project

The idea to make a solidarity support poster came from Göttingen and was discussed during nationwide meetings for the "Art As Resistance" exhibition. A majority of groups in this meeting were from the collapsed "northern German" structures. The poster was distributed all over Germany, but especially in the northern regions.

The detail of the motif shows a complex political picture. Unlike previous KuK posters, symbols, colors, and changes in direction are pushed to the limit. The resistance and the repression apparatus are shown as fire and a swastika spider squaring off against each other. In the middle of the fire, the symbols from the resistance are presented: the logo of 'radikal', the black cat of the 'Jobber' movement, the RZ star, symbols of prison resistance and the women's movement, a star with a hammer and sickle representing communist organizations, anarchist "a" and a black star, and the symbols of the RAF and the Second of June Movement, with the latter a little bit outside of the fire since the group no longer existed at that time. Since the actual criminalization was directed against autonomist anti-fascists, the symbol of AntiFascist Action is larger than all of the others. The spider monster is holding a "129a" ax in its fist, aiming at the resistance. The other arms of the spider symbolize the power of the media, with televisions and magazines, economic power, with factories, technology, and money, and the state's tolerance of fascist groups and ideology. A police star is at the center of the spider, featuring a judge, a capitalist, and a soldier/cop. These aren't abstract figures, rather actual personalities in Germany. The judge, who's swinging an ax, is state prosecutor Kurt Rebmann. Next to him is the head of the Deutsche Bank, Alfred Herrhausen. In front of them both is Ulrich Wegener, head of the GSG-9 "anti-terror" police.

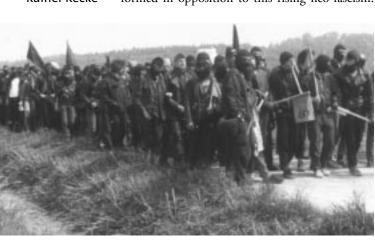
The Confrontation

The spider is in the middle of a web made of paragraph legal symbols, which is being burned by the fire. The spider web fades against a backdrop of yellow flames on the left side. The background has colors of yellow and beige and dark brown. The further to the right side, the more clearer the paragraph symbols of the web can be seen. (5,000 copies; July 1989, V.i.S.d.P.: Rudolf Egelhofer; see pages 116 and 187 of the German edition)

"We Attack The Fascists!
For A Self-Organized Struggle!"
The fascist Karl Polacek, at first active in the NPD,

The fascist Karl Polacek, at first active in the NPD, became part of the FAP in 1985. His house in Mackenrode near Göttingen became an important nationwide meeting point for fascists within just a few years. Attacks on leftists, gays, and foreigners in southern Lower Saxony (Göttingen/Northeim) originated in this house after 1987. At attack on the JuZI youth center, a meeting point for the autonomist scene in Göttingen, on January 28, 1988, which was beaten back by autonomists, was the highpoint of these Nazi actions.

In 1987, the Göttingen Anti-Fascist Coalition formed in opposition to this rising neo-fascism.



The coalition organized a demonstration against the FAP center in Mackenrode on May 7, 1988. It was clear beforehand that all groups would demonstrate in their own manner. In addition to a joint call for the demonstration, individual groups were free to print their own. The DGB trade unions took on the legal formality of registering the demonstration. The autonomists put together a masked and ready black bloc, but did not call for attacks on the house. Clubs and helmets were taken for defence in case police or the fascists attacked the demonstration. There had never been such a spectrum of political cooperation before this demonstration. It was made possible by approaching one another with mutual trust. Before the demonstration, a public event was held in the village to publicize information about the FAP and the reasons for the demonstration. An autonomist, masked to be protected from the cameras of the fascists and the police, spoke at the event to defend the necessity of taking direct action against neo-Nazis.

Agitation Not Just Against The FAP Alone

The poster calling for the Mackenrode demonstration was produced and distributed by autonomists. The Göttingen Anti-Fascist Coalition did not produce a poster. The autonomist poster shows a mass of people behind an Anti-Fascist

The anti-fascist

demonstration

forms. The flag

can seen in the

Rainer Recke

on the FAP house

distance. Photos:

Action flag heading to the FAP house, its roof on fire, at the center of a broken swastika. In order to get as realistic an effect possible of a broken swastika, a large glass image was made and broken with a hammer. The broken pieces were then collected together and photographed. This makes the broken swastika on the poster seem so realistic.

Information about Nazi attacks and antifascist actions in the region of southern Lower Saxony from 1987 until the date of the demo in Mackenrode was displayed inside the Nazi symbol. The addresses of prominent fascists in the region were also printed. This is to make the point that the demonstration was not to be a single action, but rather part of continuing anti-fascist work. It also makes the point that the fight against neo-fascism isn't just against the FAP, but rather there are a whole series of organizations which must be struggled against.

The Criminalization Of The Mackenrode Poster

The criminalization of the Mackenrode poster began with a complaint filed on May 5, 1988 by NPD functionary Hans-Michael Fiedler against the student union (AStA) of Göttingen University.

This legal suit threatened to fine the AStA 50,000 marks if it continued to distribute special edition number 151 of the publication 'gottinger nachrichten'. The reason for this was the last page, which was a reproduction of the poster. The poster features Fiedler's address next to a picture of a burning house.

On May 9, 1988, FAP cadre Karl Polacek wrote a letter to the AStA. He accused the student group of calling on people to burn down his house. He called on the AStA to sign an apology, provided by him, and pay all his relevant legal bills. Fiedler made a similar demand on May 10.

The AStA responded to these complaints from the fascists and re-designed the back page. There was lots of criticism of this quick reaction by the AStA, and the complaints grew even louder after a state court in Göttingen threw out Polacek's legal suit. But an end to legal troubles was not yet near. After the fascists failed in their attempts in court, state prosecutors suddenly opened investigation under Paragraph 111 (inciting violence, namely arson). But this criminalization did not proceed as planned. The Göttingen state court suspended proceedings due to a lack of evidence. Prosecutors appealed the ruling to the superior court in Luneburg. Since no new evidence was presented during the appeal, the charges were dropped completely some years later.



A Great Anti-Fascist Success

The anti-fascist demonstration in Mackenrode by 2,000 people was the largest demo against the FAP in the 1980s. The black bloc comprised nearly one half of the demo. Police did not search demonstrators or their cars beforehand, nor did they seek to hinder the march. Although the FAP center was heavily protected by riot police, it was hit by firecrackers and blobs of paint. The entire demo participated in these actions.

For the first time ever, a coalition concept including autonomists, trade unionists, and other groups had been pulled off. The participation of autonomists in this coalition and other anti-fascist work showed that militant politics can be publicly represented. It was possible to break out of the isolation which autonomists had become stuck in by means of a constructive political concept.

(1,000 copies; April 1988; V.i.S.d.P.: Ernst Schneller; see pages 116 and 179 of the German edition)

Riot police guard the FAP center in Mackenrode.



The statue in the Rosengarten. Photos: Rainer Recke

"All Will Fall!"

In 1925, a granite statue of a soldier was erected in Göttingen. The monument was designed to honor soldiers of the 2nd Kur-Hessian Infantry Division No. 82 who died for the 'Vaterland' during the First World War.

From day one, this monument was a symbol of German militarism. The monument was dedicated with lots of pomp and circumstance, and even a military parade, despite the fact that the regiment had been disbanded by the Treaty of Versailles. The re-armament program launched by the Nazis in 1937 led to the re-establishment of the 82nd Division. Of course, this occasion was also celebrated in front of the granite statue.

After the Second World War, this stone monstrosity, now a symbol of two world wars, was not torn down, instead it was polished up. The stone soldier was relocated across from a school in a place called the Rosengarten. With the support of veterans' groups, local citizens, and the university, granite blocks were made into a wall around the statue, complete with plaques of the emblems of East Prussian and Lower Saxony military regiments.

The dedication of this new monument in 1953 was once again a cause for pomp and circumstance. Lower Saxony's minister president, Kopf (SPD), the mayor of Göttingen, and the dean of Göttingen University were all present for the ceremony.

From this point on, the quiet Rosengarten, "a place of stillness among the business of daily life" (according to a brochure published in Göttingen in 1987 about the Rosengarten), took on a new political function. First of all, the East Prussian Association used an annual militarist gathering there to push its revisionist propaganda. This meeting was held every year between the end of August and the beginning of September. A number of prominent politicians and speakers

Demonstration against the militarist and revisionist meeting in the Rosengarten, September 4,1988.





joined up to 3,000 other guests from Germany and other countries for this ceremony. Veterans' groups attended, as did uniformed members of the German, British, French, Belgian, and American armed forces. The ceremony at the Rosengarten memorial was one of the largest of its kind.

Against Revisionism And Militarism

Apart from the attempt by some autonomists do disrupt the Rosengarten festival in 1986 by mean of noise makers, and other actions which were generally ignored, there had been no serious attempts to organize resistance to this meeting.

That changed for the first time in 1988 with the Göttingen Anti-Fascist Coalition. Following the successful demonstration against the FAP center in Mackenrode, an event entitled "Anti-Fascist Week" was organized to mobilize for a demonstration on September 4 against the Rosengarten ceremony. The Coalition wanted to make the point that anti-fascism doesn't just mean opposing neo-fascist groups, but also revisionism and militarism.

From A To B

The Antifa Coalition was supposed to put out a poster calling for the Rosengarten demonstration. After the Coalition decided on the motto "All Will Fall!" for the antifa week, autonomists came up with the proposal to have the poster show an image of the Rosengarten statue toppled. The DGB trade unions rejected this proposal. After long discussions, the Coalition decided to put out a poster with only a picture of the statue toppled

86

over, by using a old picture from 1987 when the granite soldier lay next to its base one morning.

In addition to this poster, autonomists put out their own version, with their original idea. Both posters show many similarities with one another in the way they were designed. Furthermore, they were marked with the letters A and B.

A Tricky Photo

Whereas version B was relatively easy to put together, poster A involved serious technical difficulties. It was clear that only a real photo could accurately show people pulling over the statue. A rope was prepared, and the scene would be in the afternoon. Since the statue's location is far from hidden, the photo action would have to proceed swiftly. But with the exception of a few old folks who nearly lost their dentures as they watched what was going on, no suspicions were aroused during the photo session.

With this real photo in hand, the rest of the poster montage was easy to create. The lying down statue from poster B was cut out and pasted onto the new action photo. This provided the motif for poster A. Several thousand small stickers were also printed of the A version.

Off With His Head!

In the night of August 3, 1988, the commando 'Hut ab, Kopf ab, haut ab!' (Mask on, head off, get

away!) turned the poster motif into praxis and pulled the granite statue off its base and stole the head. Ever since, a mere wooden cross now stands where the granite soldier once was.

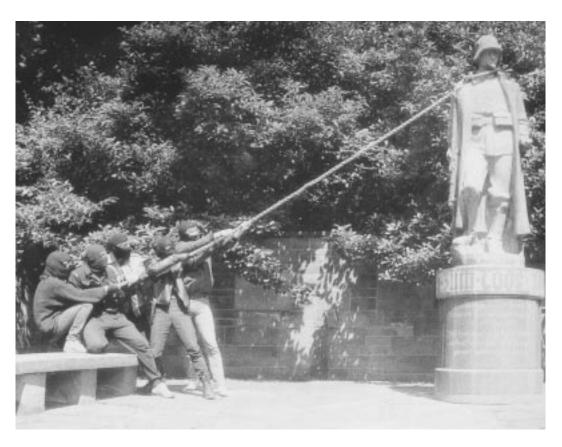
After the statue was toppled for real, the DGB trade unionists began to get cold feet. Now, even the image of just the toppled statue was too much for them. In the end, the B poster was printed with the name "Göttingen Anti-Fascist Coalition" removed.

The Criminalization

Authorities launched an investigation into the A version of the poster. Police began nightly searches for people hanging up the posters. Even people with the small stickers got in trouble. Once the police had got their hands on a few anti-fascists, the group Soldiers' Memorials Curatorium filed charges against them.

In the end, eight people faced charges under Paragraph 111 (inciting criminal activity, in this case Paragraphs 303 and 304, vandalism). But the authorities didn't get very far, and no one made any statements to the police.

Once the criminalization of the posters and stickers was publicized, of course people didn't stop putting them up. In order to go on the offensive against the criminalization, T-shirts and single color patches of the design were made. In the end, charges were dropped after people paid fines



The original photo used for the Rosengarten poster. Photo: Rainer Recke



The statue's head in 1996, seven years after it disappeared.

German and British military officers behind lines of riot police. This photo is from September 3, 1988. That was the last year ceremonies were held in the Rosengarten. Photo: Rainer Recke

of 55 marks to the city council for illegal postering. One person caught putting up a sticker had to pay a fine of 225 marks, however.

A Limited Coalition

The criminalization of the Rosengarten poster led to the IG Metall union distancing itself from the Coalition, but the Greens expressed solidarity. The distance between the trade unions and others doing anti-fascist work in the Coalition became greater. The DGB called for its members to pull out. Even many autonomists were increasingly critical of the concept. Even before the Antifa Week, it was clear that the demonstration on September 4 would be the last joint action of the Göttingen Anti-Fascist Coalition. Around 400 people took part in the demo on September 4. In the downtown area, a few banks got hit with globs of paint. Shortly after the September 4 demonstration, the DGB officially called an end to its cooperation, and among the autonomists, the former representatives in the Coalition began to be excluded. Although the Coalition disbanded, valuable experiences were gained. They were fundamental for future coalition demonstrations against fascist centers in later years.

Still Relevant Today

The significance of the Rosengarten ceremony declined greatly after 1988. After that year, military delegations no longer took part, in fact total participation dwindled to little more than a hundred people. But the meeting is still held every year. Now as before, conservative and reactionary politicians appear and give speeches at the Rosengarten. Because of the decline in significance of the Rosengarten, there were no anti-fascist mobilizations against it in the next few years. In 1996, right-wing CDU politician Alfred Dregger was due to speak at the Rosengarten. So an anti-fascist action coalition called for an occupation of

the square on September 1. In order to keep things quiet for the 400 or so people attending the Rosengarten ceremony, riot police baton charged the 200 anti-fascists. Some people were injured. A Green member of the state parliament received a head injury, resulting in lots of media attention. This Green also caused quite a stir in the state assembly when she held up the police club which was used to hit her.

A Dip In The Lake

Although the Rosengarten memorial was restored, the granite statue toppled by the antifa commando was not put back up. It would take some time to replace the head. The granite soldier eventually reappeared in the Field Marshall Rommel Barracks in the town of Osterode am Harz. At about the same time, the real head reappeared as well – without anyone knowing it. On April 19, 1996, the daily newspaper 'Göttinger Tageblatt' reported that the soldier's granite had been found after more than seven years and eight months.

A diver swimming in a small body of water near Barterode found the head buried under some trash in the bottom of a lake in 1991. He put the object in his basement, and a few years later he dug it out and put it on display in his antiques shop in the town of Bad Karlshafen. In 1996, an old pensioner from Göttingen happened to wander by. The man recognized the head in the window and immediately called police.

Before the commemoration ceremony in September 1997 another attack on the Rosengarten took place. A demonstration against the ceremony was disrupted and attacked by the police. After all these actions, the reactionary "Landsmannschaft Ostpreußen" resolved to quit the ceremonies in Göttingen.

(poster, version A: 1,000 copies, version B, 800 copies; 1988; see pages 116 and 180/181 of the German edition)



The Death Of Conny Wessmann

Far-right parties launched an offensive election campaign for the European Parliament elections in 1989. In particular, the 'Liste D', an alliance of the NPD and the DVU, organized a number of events all across Germany. In Göttingen, there were two such public events, on May 13 and June 16. KuK posters were used to mobilize against both of these events (see pages 182 and 183 of the German edition). Although there were clashes with the police during the action in May, the June occupation of the site of the planned fascist election rally by anti-fascists went off without any problems. The fascists did not show up.

Starting in July, there were increasing attacks from the Nazi scene. Every weekend in Göttingen there were clashes between Nazis and anti-fascists. Police always intervened on the side of the Nazis. Whereas the neo-fascists were protected, anti-fascists faced criminal proceedings. This led to the creation of a poster entitled "We And Our Police" (see page 188 of the German edition). The theme of this poster was relevant in other cities as well as was widely distributed in northern Germany.

In order to make the political dimension of these latest clashes clear, an "anti-pogrom" demonstration was mobilized for November 9, 1989 (see page 184 of the German edition). The date November 9th is of historical significance in Germany, for it's the date of the November Revolution in 1918 during the German Empire and it's also the date in 1938 of the Nazi pogroms against the Jews. This demonstration was to draw links between these dates and the present situation.

The demo route included a number of stops for speeches at historical locations and actual meeting points of neo-Nazis. Outside the offices of the 'Göttinger Tageblatts' newspaper, the role of the Nazi movement during the Weimar period was compared to contemporary media reports of clashes between autonomists and fascists. This newspaper regularly calls clashes between autonomists and fascists as "fights between rival youth gangs". This serves to ignore the political background of the confrontations.

November 17, 1989

On the evening of November 17, 1989, there was a clash between anti-fascists and around 20 neo-Nazis in the Burgstraße in downtown Göttingen.

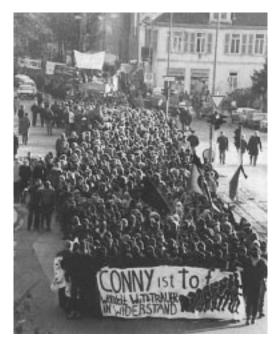
Residents called police, who then separated the skins from the anti-fascists. The fascists were escorted to a bus station so they could take public transportation out of the city. In the meantime, a phone chain helped mobilize more anti-fascists in the direction of Burgstraße. One of these groups of people headed towards the Iduna Center when they got word that the police were escorting the Nazis to the bus station. One person in this group of anti-fascists was 20-year-old Conny Wessmann. As they made their way towards the fascists, the antifas were observed by an ZSK (plainclothes) police unit. When officers asked the leader of the ZSK units over their police radio, "Should we smash them?", he said yes.

The ensuing attack by plainclothes and riot police on the anti-fascists involved baton charges and CS gas. While attempting to flee from the police attack, the group headed in the direction of the Weender Landstraße, a road with a great deal of traffic. Conny was hit by a car and killed.

In this same night, burning barricades were erected outside the JuZI youth center. There were attacks and spontaneous demonstrations in Göttingen and other cities as well. A vigil occupied



Police brutally arrest an antifascist during a DVU, Liste D election rally in Göttingen, May 13,1989.



The first nationwide demonstration after the death of Conny Wessmann, November 25, 1989.

After Conny's death, a continuous vigil was held at the spot where she was killed. The last night of this vigil ended with a large bon fire. Photos: Rainer Recke



the site on the Weender Landstraße where Conny had been killed and the road was blockaded for several days. On November 20, riot police used baton charges to break up the vigil and clear the road.

Political Murder

Political murder is when a person loses their life during the course of a political confrontation. It doesn't matter if their death was planned or

the result of circumstances. The deciding factor is that person's connection to the political events.

The Conny Demonstration, 1989

The first nationwide demonstration following Conny's death was on November 25, 1989, when 20,000 people marched through Göttingen. All autonomist groups mobilized for this demonstration. Several calls for this demo were issued, and there were three different posters for it in Göttingen alone. One of these was "You Will Pay Us Everything And It's Going To Cost You!", a poster by KuK. This poster had a very simple design, for it was a statement of mourning (see pages 116 and 190 of the German edition).

Due to the very emotional atmosphere surrounding this nationwide demonstration, the police kept their distance. Besides, even if they had wanted to attack the demo, it would have been extremely difficult to maintain control over such a large number of people in downtown Göttingen. A moment of silence was held on the spot where Conny was killed. Afterwards, the march headed towards Göttingen's police station, and on the way several windows were smashed.

After the demonstration had ended, riot police stormed the JuZI youth center. This resulted in a brief but heavy clash between cops and demonstrators.

Conny's death remained an important issue throughout 1990. A vigil was held on the Weender Landstraße on the 17th of every month.

The Conny Demonstration, 1990

On November 17, 1990, another mass demonstration was organized in Göttingen to remember

the political murder of Conny Wessmann. This time, preparations were marked by internal discussions. Some people wanted another nationwide demonstration, while others wanted just a silent vigil. The political differences behind these divergent opinions could not be resolved. The splits were also evident in the disagreements about the poster design for the mobilization. After days of wrangling, an general assembly meeting in the JuZI decided on KuK's poster "No Forgiving – No Forgetting!" (see page 191 of the German edition). Because not everyone supported this design, a second poster was made with the simple motif from 1989.

A City On Edge

The state tried to scare people away from the Conny demo in 1990. Göttingen's police chief ordered "the largest police mobilization of all times in Göttingen". Video cameras were installed on the tops of buildings along the demo route for surveillance. This general atmosphere of panic was increased with rumors and horror scenarios.

An important role in this smear campaign was played by the images of the days of rioting in Berlin following the eviction of the Mainzerstraße squats the week before. Newspapers in Göttingen ran headlines claiming that the Conny demo was going to be used as "revenge for Berlin".

These and other rumors brought the mood in Göttingen to near hysteria. Some schools cancelled classes out of concern for kids' safety. The windows of almost all the shops downtown had been boarded up and protected. Right before the demo, all the streets in Göttingen were swept clean to remove all debris. Downtown Göttingen looked like a ghost town. Apart from demonstrators and police, no one was there.

A Peaceful Demonstration

The political demands of the demonstration on the first anniversary of Conny's death were legal justice and the abolition of the ZSK special police units in Göttingen.

Despite a media smear campaign and cold weather, around 7,000 people participated in the Conny demo on November 17, 1990. The march was led by a women's/lesbian bloc.

Around 3,000 demonstrators were masked. Riot police marched right alongside the demo. Only at the site of the vigil did police move back and keep their distance. There were no clashes with police or attacks on property during the demo.

(computer montage poster; 2,000 copies; November 1990; see pages 190 and 191 of the German edition)



"Everyone On Your Feet! Against The Fascist Pigs!"

Following the European elections on June 17, 1989, Nazi terror in Göttingen and the surrounding areas was on this rise. Fascist attacks became almost normal events. The anti-fascist self-help organized by autonomists was the only thing which kept the Nazis and their terror from ruling the streets at night and prevented them from expanding.

Smear Campaign Against Autonomists

The clashes during the nationwide Conny demonstration on November 25, 1989 resulted in a media smear campaign against autonomist anti-fascism. For example, the 'Hessisch-Niedersächsische Allgemeine' newspaper reported on November 27, 1989 that "63 bags of molotovs and weapons" had been confiscated by police before the demo.

Later on, it turned out that these "weapons" were car tools and spare gasoline canisters.

As the press spread these lies widely, reports about fascist attacks and police conduct were absent. For example, on the morning of November 24, 1989, fascists carried out arson attacks on a number of students' homes. It was only luck which prevented people from being injured. Although the arson was an obvious act by fascists, the media failed to note any political background to the attack.

The Attempted Murder Of Sebastian B.

Another example of media silence followed the attempted murder of Sebastian B. on November 25, 1989. On this evening, Sebastian and a friend came across a skinhead near Göttingen's train station after the Conny demo. Without warning, the skinhead pulled a knife and charged at the two. Sebastian was seriously injured with several knife wounds. As this happened, three bus loads of riot police were parked across the street. The police did nothing, and they didn't even call for an ambulance until Sebastian's friend asked them to do so. Police didn't even begin searching for the skinhead suspect until after they had checked the ID of Sebastian's friend. The attacker was never caught.

Police refused to try and identify the suspect with the help of police files when asked to do so on November 28 and again on December 1. Such conduct is unusual, but police justified it by saying there was no evidence that the attack had been politically motivated and that police had already looked through their files but had no information on young men with short blond hair.



KuK motifs were used for various actions. This one is from a stencil calling for the Conny demo, 1990.

Police Protect Nazi Demonstrators

During the nationwide Conny demo in Göttingen on November 25, 1989, Nazis held their own march in the nearby town of Duderstadt.

On December 9, 1989, another Nazi demo was organized, this time in Göttingen itself. A few hundred members of the FAP marched through the streets and attacked the JuZI youth center. Although the attack was beaten back, police continued to protect the fascists after this incident, and gave them increased protection later on from a spontaneous demonstration of more than 300 anti-fascists.

The Poster Motif

The text and the visual imagery of the "Everyone On Your Feet!" poster are related to the events described above. The design began with a black and white sketch. Later some figures were photocopied and cut out to form a montage. The poster was used nationwide for various anti-fascist actions. Stickers, flyers, t-shirts, and demo banners also made use of this design.

(1,000 copies; November 1989; see pages 116 and 189 of the German edition)

Spontaneous anti-fascist demonstration following an attack by FAP members on the JuZI youth center in Göttingen, December 9, 1989.The attempt to attack the Nazis at the place where their cars were parked was stopped by police. Police protected the fascists as they got into their cars and busses and escorted them away. Photo: Rainer Recke





Stencil against the ZSK, 1990.

"Abolish The ZSK Special Units!"

Since the early 1980s, special police evidence and arrest commandos (AufKdo) existed in the Göttingen police force, numbering about 60 men. Their task was to spy on and intimidate the leftist scene, especially the squatters' movement. The AufKdo have their own information central and radio frequency. Files full of data on "suspicious" persons were collected and stored in a secret file called the 'Spudok' to be used later on as evidence. There was no legal reason for such data to be collected and stored. The eventual publication of some radio transmissions by AufKdo officers resulted in the so-called 'Spudok' scandal:

A: "Two of our friends are standing in the basement of the theater, playing hitchhiker. You all can take them away."

B: "Okay!"

C: "Chuck them out in 'Kerstlingeröder' Field."

A: "Dig a little hole, toss them in."

Public pressure resulted in the AufKdo being disbanded. But in 1986, a very similar unit, the ZSK, was formed. Even many of the personnel stayed the same. Many of the same officers who had been part of the AufKdo from 1982 to 1986 now became part of the ZSK.

SS, SA, ZSK

Slogans against the political police such as "Police, SA, SS!" and "SS, SA, SEK!", which drew parallels to the Nazi era, arose during political confrontations of the early 1980s. There was no deep analysis behind such slogans, rather they were

simply shouted at the cops during confrontations on the streets. Of course they are pure rhetoric. Such false equations diminish the seriousness of the crimes of fascism. But despite this problem of content, a poster with the provocative slogan "SS, SA, ZSK!" was created. This was to show a continuity in the police from the Third Reich up to today. Of course there are similarities in the function of the police forces. Despite political changes in the country, the police have always been an apparatus of repression against the leftist resistance. It is this function that the slogan above aims at. In order to make the historical differentiation clear, detailed texts about the history of the police appeared along with the poster.

The Police Apparatus During The Weimar Republic

During the Weimar Republic, the police apparatus was used as a means to suppress the revolutionary movement. Under an SPD government, all revolutionary uprisings between 1918 and 1923 were bloodily suppressed by bands of reactionary free corps volunteers. In 1918, a political secret service apparatus was set up by the military, aimed against communist organizations and the workers' movement. The transition from the Weimar Republic to Nazi fascism had no effect on the police. Although Nazi party members were put into leading positions, the majority of the police apparatus remained the same as it always had been.

The SA And The SS

In 1921/22, the NSDAP (the Nazi party) formed the 'Sturmabteilung' (SA), the Storm Division.



During a squatter's demo on December 15, 1990, a ZSK patrol car was overturned.

This party army recruited mainly among former free corps volunteers. As a security force, the SA was not only responsible for guarding halls during events, but it was an instrument of terror to be used against political opponents.

After the failed Hitler putsch on November 9, 1923, and the temporary banning of the NSDAP, many Nazi leaders lamented the collapse of the party. The reason for this collapse was, according to many Nazi leaders, the absence of an internal party army to maintain order and discipline. This duty was now given to the 'Schutzstaffel' (SS), the Security Squadron. The SS gathered information and spied on everyone. Nothing was secret from the SS.

Dung the phase of the seizure of power in 1933, SA men were used widely as "police reserves". Many were later accepted into the regular police forces.

The Police Under Nazi Fascism

After 1933, Germany had a highly modern, centralized police apparatus. Himmler, head of the SS and Chief of German Police, allowed the interior ministers of the individual states to control only administrative police, keeping all other police forces under his central control.

At the same time, he gave all high ranking SS officers official police titles as well. On September 27, 1937, the Reich's Security Headquarters (RSHA) was set up to include all state officials, security police, and the SS. During the Second World War, police units were stationed in occupied countries. These units were part of the SS, more specifically the 'Waffen-SS', and were usually given the task of fighting against partisans. Throughout the war, these units were given increasingly heavy arms, including tanks. These police units were involved in some of the worst atrocities during the war.





Continuity After 1945

Although Nazi organizations were disbanded after 1945, the police remained largely untouched. The West German police recruited even high ranking police functionaries who had worked before 1945. But it wasn't just the personnel, the structure of the old Nazi police apparatus survived into the parliamentary democracy era. The most famous example is the Gehlen Organization, part of the Foreign Legion East secret service of the army. Although the Foreign Legion East was part of the RSHA, it had some autonomy. The legion was run by Reinhard Gehlen. Gehlen approached American intelligence experts in July 1945 to discuss possible cooperation. Gehlen offered his archives and the fascists' concept of the secret service. An intelligence deal was signed. The cadre of the Gehlen Organization went on to become the Federal Intelligence Agency (BND), West Germany's intelligence service, in 1956. Other cadre became part of the military's intelligence agency (MAD) and the Office for the Protection of the Constitution (VS). Despite this continuity, however, it's a mistake to equate today's police with the organizations of the Nazi period. Changes in social conditions require changes in forms of political oppression.

(film montage poster; 1,500 copies; August 1990; see page 192 of the German edition)

Banner on the JuZI, November, 1990.

Stencil after the murder of Conny Wessmann, "In favor of the power of the rich they step over dead bodies", 1990.

"Germany, Never Again!" And The Demonstrations On October 2nd

No other event in 1990 dominated German life more than the so-called reunification.

Germany was intoxicated by reunification. Opponents of the annexation of the DDR to West Germany were an absolute minority.

In Göttingen, autonomist anti-fascists initiated a 'Nie wieder Deutschland!' campaign.

There were actions nationwide against West Germany taking over the East. A spectrum from the Greens to communist groups in the East and West formed under the name "Radical Left". The Radical Left agitated under the slogan "Germany, Never Again!" and organized events and demonstrations in various cities. This initiative was not directly linked to the campaign in Göttingen.

Demonstration In Frankfurt

On May 12, 1990, the Radical Left alliance called for a nationwide demonstration in Frankfurt and 8,000 people took part. It was clear from the beginning of the demo that the police were determined to demonstrate the strength of the state. Busloads of demonstrators were searched top to bottom by the cops. Riot police accompanied the demo, which proceeded behind a bus for arrested persons and watercannons. Despite these police provocations, the rally was peaceful. But when the demo was over, police suddenly attacked with clubs and watercannons. This police attack resulted in several arrests and injuries.

Actions

The date for Germany's "reunification" was set for October 3, 1990. Early elections for a parliament of "German unity" were slated as early as December 2, 1990. Activities by leftist groups across Germany in opposition to the October 3rd date were varied. In many areas, there were small actions, mostly from autonomist circles. But only

Spitting fire, following an agitprop action on the evening of October 2, 1991. Photo: Rainer Recke



the counter actions in Göttingen and Berlin received nationwide media attention.

Germany, Shut Up!

The celebrations in Berlin were to be given special prominence, and official events were organized for October 2-3, 1990.

Preparations for counter activities began a few weeks beforehand. Autonomist groups mobilized under the slogan "Germany, Shut Up!" all across the country.

The idea was to organize two days of actions, with events, demonstrations, and so on. But most events never got off the ground. The counter actions on October 2, 1990, were not happy events. More than 100,000 people had assembled around the Brandenburg Gate to celebrate German unity. Police presence was extremely high, with more than 4,000 cops and border police on active duty. Small attempts at disruption were swiftly quashed. Many people were arrested before actions even got underway, so there wasn't much disruption in Berlin on October 2, 1990.

A Festival Overshadowed

Things were very different on October 3rd, however. More than 10,000 people marched in the "Germany, Shut Up!" demo. There were several clashes with riot police. The mass media reported that the official festivities had been "overshadowed" by the violence. This "overshadowing" included 333 arrests and an unknown number of injuries.

The last major demonstration against "reunification" was on November 3, 1990 in Berlin. The Radical Left mobilized nationwide under the motto "Death Is A Master From Germany". Several thousand people took part in this demonstration, many of them autonomists.

A Militant Demonstration

The evening of October 2, 1990 marked the highpoint of the "Germany, Never Again!" campaign in Göttingen. A demonstration and other actions were planned to disrupt the nationalist festivities marking the official "reunification" at the stroke of midnight. The idea was to critique German nationalism and the imperialist system. The concept developed by autonomist groups in Göttingen for October 2, 1990 was a broad day of action, involving as many people as possible.

Agit-Prop Actions

The evening began at five o'clock with an agitprop street theater action. Four people in

Agit-prop action,

October 2, 1992.



costumes, with their faces decorated as skulls, walked down the streets. One was dressed as a Prussian officer, another was an SA officer, one was a capitalist, and the fourth was a West German cop in riot gear. These four symbolic figures were holding a banner that read "We Greet Germany!", written in an old form of Germanic script (see pages 196 and 197 of the German edition).

The Neanderthals

As this was going on, thousands of fake 100 mark bills were handed out on Göttingen's Marktplatz. These bills featured the head of a Neanderthal man on one side and the German eagle sitting on a banana on the other. These bills were a joking reference to the "welcome money" of 100 marks being handed out to East Germans crossing the border into the capitalist market for the first time. Because German officials were planning to introduce new 100 mark bills at the time, some of KuK's bills actually went into circulation.

Authorities responded by launching an investigation into "the creation and distribution of counterfeit currency".

Some bills which were left over after the agit-prop action were distributed during a demonstration in the city of Kiel on November 10. People handing them out later received notices to appear in court. These notices were ignored, and the charges were eventually dropped.

Burning Flags

The demonstration on October 2 in Göttingen began at nightfall. Around 2,000 people joined in the march. Despite some broken windows, the situation did not escalate much. On the Marktplatz in downtown Göttingen, several German flags went up in flames at midnight.

The "Germany, Never Again!" campaign in Göttingen ended with the Bundestag elections on December 2, 1990. An increased agitation for election sabotage preceded this date, as did a call for an active boycott and several militant actions.

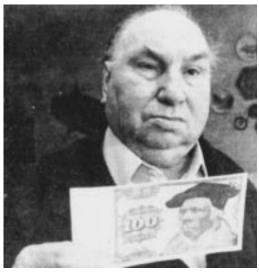
An Autonomist "Traditional Demonstration"

The 'Nie wieder Deutschland!' demonstration became the basis for an "autonomist tradition" in Göttingen. Starting in 1990, an agit-prop action and a demonstration were organized every year. The date was mobilized for under a different motto each year, with an emphasis on domestic political themes such as the police state or cutbacks in social spending. The October demonstrations were an attempt to turn an independent cultural



Agit-propaction in Göttingen, October 2, 1993. Photo: Marcus Höhn

A nearly blind old age retiree gets a fresh printed Neanderthal bill. The bank will judge him, Göttinger Tageblatt, March 6, 1991.



approach into practice. The aim was to transmit the political content and critiques of the autonomist left to the general public. On October 2, 1991, actions were organized under the motto "Against The Police State And Racism". The centerpiece of the agit-prop action was a paper mache police octopus with moving tentacles. This piece was carried in front of the demonstration. A group of three people marched ahead of the lead banner, dressed up as two soldiers/police and a prisoner, wearing a sign reading "I will never demonstrate against fascism again" (see pages 117 and 208 of the German edition).

Riot police marched alongside of this demonstration. In addition to a poster for the demo, a fake letter from the police with an ironic text about the demonstration was distributed as well (see pages 136 and 200 of the German edition). More than 1,500 people took part in the action. At the end of the demo, the police octopus prop was burned on the Marktplatz.

In 1992, the motto "Create Anti-Fascist Unity – The Future Belongs To Us!" was used for the October 2nd demo. The focus was on the organization process. Groups from different countries were invited to Göttingen. Delegations from Denmark, Italy, and France took part in the demonstration, and groups from other countries sent solidarity messages (see page 201 of the German edition).

For the agit-prop action, a banner 15 meters long and 3 meters high was hung behind a stage. In front of this were people dressed up in historical police uniforms from 1871 to the present. The banner featured comic drawings of these figures and the corresponding dates, and all were shown swinging their batons. Next to these police figures was a cart of "consumer junk". This junk was comprised of several symbols: a Playboy bunny, Paragraphs 218 and 129a, a tank, a TV, a heroine

needle, a swastika, a tabloid newspaper, a map of the German Empire in its 1871 borders, a sack of gold with the emblem of the Deutsche Bank and the Shell corporation, and flags of the European Union and Germany (see pages 201 and 208-210 of the German edition). The "police" and cartload of symbols walked around during the day handing out leaflets and giving speeches. In addition, little paper toy cops (see pages 137 and 138 of the German edition) were handed out. Around 1,500 people took part in the demonstration. At the closing rally, all of the props were burned after reading corresponding statements.

The motto "Increase Anti-Fascist Solidarity!" was the mobilizational call for the demo on October 2, 1993. The theme that year was the criminalization of the anti-fascist resistance. The agit-prop action dealt with the complex mix of economic and political factors which lead to the reactionary development of capitalist society. The main prop was a 3 x 3 meter "Pyramid of Hierarchy" made of wood and cloth. The sides of the pyramid were painted with complex images dealing with the themes of "invisible instruments of power", "patriarchy", "racism", and "capitalism" (see pages 201, 204-207, and 211 of the German edition). During the action, a brochure describing the elements of the images on the pyramid was distributed. Alongside the pyramid, five people were dressed up as Patriarchy, Fascism, Capitalism, Militarism, and Media Manipulation. These symbolic figures made periodic statements through a loudspeaker before being placed in coffins. These coffins were carried during the



A jumping jack given out at the Agit-prop action on October 2, 1992. "I'm a stupid jumping jack, everbody comes and pulls the string".

People and cars were searched

demonstration

in Göttingen on

October 2, 1995.

before the



demonstration, and broken apart at relevant points during the march. The Pyramid of Hierarchy went up in flames after the demonstration (see pages 134 and 212 of the German edition).

For October 2, 1994, the motto was "Don't Be Fooled! Unmask Parliamentarianism". The agit-prop action illustrated the function of elections as legitimizing the capitalist system. There was no demonstration in 1994, however, since the AA/BO was mobilizing for a nationwide demo in Bonn one week later (see page 202 of the German edition).

In 1995, "Against Fascism And Class Justice!" was the motto. In August, downtown Hannover had been trashed during the Chaos Days. These riots were used as an excuse to sharpen the police laws in Lower Saxony. Although these laws had not yet gone into effect in October, Göttingen was the site of their first use. Authorities banned the planned demonstration, and the downtown area became a police state. People were stopped and searched on street corners, and so on. So the Autonome Antifa (M) officially cancelled the demonstration. Individual citizens then obtained a permit for a rally, and the authorities had no means

of rejecting it. This created an opening for assembling downtown. After a rally, 1,000 people held a demonstration through the streets (see page 203 of the German edition). The agit-prop actions were held three weeks later. This time a small theater piece about class justice was performed. This piece was then performed in different cities throughout the year, for example, in Nürnberg on the following May Day. A planned performance near the graves of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht during an annual rally in Berlin on January 14, 1996 was prevented by a police attack. The piece wasn't performed in the capital until February 26. The slogan "Abolish Capitalism! -Struggle Together Against The Police State And Social Cutbacks!" was adopted for the actions on October 2, 1996. The agit-prop action that year was a theater piece as well. Various scenes depicted the decline of the "welfare state" and the expansion of the repression apparatus. Around 1,000 people took part in the demonstration afterwards. Despite a heavy police presence, the theater props were burned on the Marktplatz after the demo (see page 203 of the German edition).

Agit-prop actions were also performed on other occasions as well. On March 8, 1995, International Women's Day, a "gameshow" was performed on the Marktplatz, depicting a man and a woman competing for a job. Jane had more hurdles to overcome than John did...

On March 18, 1997, an agit-prop piece was performed on the International Day of Action for the Freedom of Political Prisoners (see page 228 of the German edition). Police intervened because one actor was dressed up in a police uniform. The uniform was confiscated, and the individual was charged with impersonating a police officer.



Large numbers of riot police accompanied the demonstration through Göttingen on October 2, 1995.

A "

"Art As Resistance"

A poster was created for the travelling exhibition "Art As Resistance" depicting the history of resistance in Germany, from the time of the 'Kaiserreich' to the present. The design corresponded to the content of the exhibition, whose historical section began with the First World War. The exhibition poster shows a rotating five point red star with the exhibition's motto in front of a collage. This poster was used in all the locations where the exhibition was shown. Space was left at the bottom for local details about the exhibition. The plan was to change the poster motif over time, and to make it more abstract. By the time the exhibition had reached its final destination, four versions of the poster had been created.

Poster for the exhibition "Art As Resistance", showing German history from the Kaiserreich to the present.

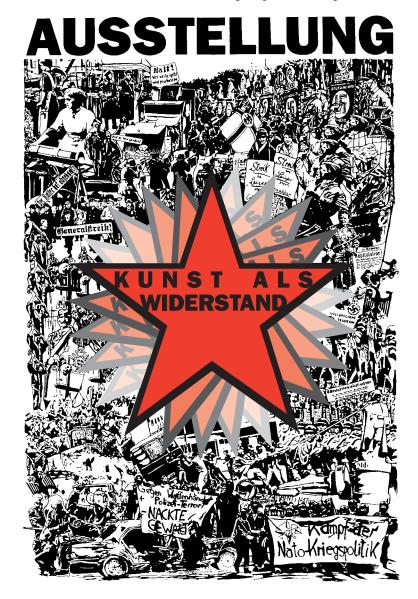
The Collage

The collage was created very painstakingly, and displays a number of political and historical themes. The collage begins with images from the First World War, such as soldiers with flags and so forth. There is also a cross with a skull on it.

Behind the skull is Kaiser Wilhelm II, standing in uniform. His ear fades into a Jesus figure, which is embracing a soldier and leading him into heaven. In the middle of this scenario is an image of a medal with the years of the First World War, 1914-1918, written on it. The word "general strike" appears above the war and the emperor, in front of a mass of people, a demonstration in Berlin in November 1918. Connected to this group of people, who represent the November Revolution, is the picture of a worker with a sledge hammer. This figure is on the left side of the poster and rises above the entire First World War section, its size steadily increasing. Above the November Revolution section are women working in the arms industry, along with the sentence "The Kaiser has abdicated". This section of the poster deals with the changing role of women in the society during this phase of history. As the war dragged on, more men were sent to the front lines. That led to more and more women being placed in the industrial sector. Next to these images are a group of counter-revolutionaries, carrying a sign that reads "Halt! Anyone who moves will be shot". Directly beneath this is a tank and a group of soldiers and Nazis with Kaiser flags and swastika banners. Across from this scene are a group of revolutionaries with the slogan "To arms!" in view. Beneath this, a group of revolutionaries are in position behind a barricade of newspapers.

The series of images from November Revolution show the development of the civil war, which flared on and off between 1918 and 1921 and which ended with the defeat of armed revolutionary resistance in Germany. On the right side of the poster there's a Nazi march, which starts out rather small among the counterrevolutionary troops in the middle of the collage but which grows larger towards the right edge.

At the end there's an Iron Cross, which the year of the start of the next war, 1939, written on it. Beneath this is a caged concentration camp prisoner and a fallen soldier. To the left of this are multiple images of a Red Army soldier whose pistol is destroying the swastika of the NSDAP banner. The series of images from the Second World War end with images of a woman Red Army soldier and the hoisting of the Soviet flag over the Reichstag building. Between the Red Army soldier and the flag is the newspaper headline "Capitulation". Beneath this are the Nazi eagle and the new West German eagle symbol. Next is a scene showing Adenauer's "rearmament" in 1955. Under this are marching



Bundeswehr soldiers and the motif from the "All Will Fall!" poster. The bottom portion of the collage shows the anti-imperialist resistance up to the present day. To the left below the "All Will Fall!" motif is a police van being overturned. Below this is a group of people with a banner against police terror. These people are shown walking on top of the image of the blown up Mercedes of Deutsche Bank chief Alfred Herrhausen, who was killed by the RAF in an attack in 1989. Next to this is a picture of the anti-NATO demo in Krefeld in 1983. On the left side is a demonstrator hitting a cop who is trying to arrest someone in the Hafenstraße. Between the Hafenstraße and a fallen eagle is a row of riot police, who are shown protecting the Prussian soldiers which were described in the beginning, thus completing the history and tradition of the ruling system in Germany.

(8,000 copies; May 1990 and September 1990; see page 193 of the German edition)

Top: The exhibition "Art As Resistance" on October 9,1994 in Göttingen.

"Militancy Concerts"

The aim of the "Art As Resistance" exhibition was to give a comprehensive presentation of resistance culture. So each exhibition was accompanied by a concert. On some occasions the band 'Schwarze Feuer' from Göttingen performed. The band 'The Ende' from Hildesheim accompanied the exhibition all across Germany. In 1991, the project came to an end, because everyone involved was exhausted. A poster entitled "Militancy Concerts" was designed for the concerts that were part of the travelling exhibition. The motif showed abstract human figures in bright colors. The figures appear in five different colors, in reference to the title of the image, "The People Of The Five Continents". There is no empty space between the figures. Although there are no double figures, in other words they are all individuals, the figures can't move on their own. In order to change their position, all of the others must change position as well. Three big brown patches add the appearance of two eyes and a mouth. The brown color represents the party color of national-socialism. So these three figures represent the different faces of fascism. One figure has a small swastika, another the German eagle, and the third one has no symbol, thereby representing the racist and reactionary tendencies within the society. The mass of people provide space for the faces of fascism, meaning that the size and form of fascism depend on the movement of people. People can give more space to fascism, or they can wipe it out altogether.

(2,000 copies; February 1990; see pages 117 and 194 of the German edition)







Militancy concert on February 17, 1990 in the JuZl. Top: "Sutton and the Handicaps", center: "The Ende" from Hildesheim, bottom bottom: "Schwarze Feuer" (Black Fire) from Göttingen.



"Against Fascism And Police Terror! The Future Belongs To Us!"

The impetus for the 1991/92 New Year's Eve ('Silvester') demonstration was the anniversary of the murder of Alexander Selchow, a 21-year-old doing his compulsory military service, in Rosdorf near Göttingen. Alexander Selchow was stabbed to death by two FAP members. The two fascists were later charged in court for manslaughter, not murder. In the end, the two Nazis received very light prison sentences. The trial had not yet ended by New Year's Eve 1991/92. The circumstances of the murder and the way the justice system deals with neo-Nazis were to be two issues raised by the demonstration. There had been quite a lot of criticisms of the police and the courts in Lower Saxony in 1991 for the way they dealt with neo-Nazis. For example, FAP cadre Thorsten Heise was on trial for a number of charges in 1990. In May, he went underground in East Germany before a verdict was issued. Heise left a statement for the state prosecutor, in which he said he wished to continue his non-violent struggle from the underground in East Germany. In the DDR, Heise built up a number of neo-Nazi structures. He wasn't arrested until police found him in Berlin in February 1991. In June 1991, Heise's trial before a state court in Göttingen ended with a sentence of two years probation. This mild sentence was widely criticized.

FAP regional leader Karl Polacek also gained notoriety in a number of trials. In 1991 he went to court to face charges that he had tried to attack a



"Who's Afraid Of The Black Bloc?" banner on the JuZI, before the 1991/1992 Silvester demo. woman anti-fascist with an ax. The trial ended with a sentence of three years probation. Polacek is one of the major players on the neo-fascist scene in southern Lower Saxony. The pair of fascists who murdered Alexander Selchow lived for a while in Polacek's house in Mackenrode. After the murder, authorities in Lower Saxony tried to have Polacek, who is an Austrian citizen, expelled from the country. Media reports of his expulsion began in January 1991 and lasted for half the year. But Polacek was never kicked out. On the contrary, his house remained an important meeting point for the neo-Nazi scene. Polacek wasn't deported until January 22, 1992.

Against Police Terror

The political aim of the Silvester demo was to propagate the struggle against neo-fascism.

On the evening of November 16, 1991, a vigil was held to remember the political murder of Conny Wessmann. Several hundred people marched to the spot where she was killed and occupied the busy street, the Weender Landstraße. At around 11:15 p.m., police attacked the 150 or so anti-fascists who were still at the vigil and injured several people. Considering this fact, the motto "Against Fascism And Police Terror!" for the Silvester demonstration was not an abstract slogan, rather it was based on actual events. More details of various incidents were described on the flyer for the demo and in speeches at events.

The Starting Point

For the year's end in 1991, Autonome Antifa (M) made use of the political situation to push through their offensive concept. The general public opinion was one of fear for Nazi attacks, and there was also a great deal of criticism of the way the police and the courts were dealing, or rather not dealing, with these attacks.

A large segment of the general public by now agreed that the dangers of neo-fascism had been previously underestimated. Meanwhile the autonomists, who actively struggled against the fascists, faced continuous repression. But the neo-Nazis always seemed to receive state protection. One example of this was Conny's death in 1989. The conduct of the police, courts, and authorities was coming under increased criticism.

A Political Risk

The Silvester demo was a political risk. A black bloc was organized in order to turn the slogan "Against Fascism And Police Terror!" into praxis. The call for a bloc of people in masks and helmets and carrying clubs was new for Göttingen. By

pushing through the demonstration, the police would be openly forced to hold back.

"...This New Year's Eve, we want to demonstrate in as big of a black bloc as possible, to show that we won't be intimidated by the present conditions and that we are determined to struggle against fascism and police terror. ... Even when the police don't attack demos, they always film them and take pictures – so do the Nazis. So it's absurd to make accusations against people just because they wear masks to protect themselves from optical surveillance and state repression..." (flyer from Autonome Antifa (M) for the Silvester Demo)

Concept

The political outlook of the Silvester Demo, as well as the route of the march and other details about the event, were made public in a published concept paper. This way of preparing the political ground for a demonstration beforehand was first utilized by the Autonome Antifa (M) for the October 2, 1991 "Against The Spirit Of The Times" actions on the anniversary of Germany's "reunification".

A Tense Situation

In 1990/91, there were a series of militant attacks from the autonomist spectrum throughout Lower Saxony. Because of these attacks, and others from previous years, federal authorities launched an investigation under Paragraph 129. On December 24, a regional newspaper wrote that "federal authorities are investigating members of the autonomist scene in Göttingen on suspicions that they are members of a terrorist organization". The investigations were being directed by federal authorities from the Federal Prosecutor's Office in Celle.

By the end of 1991, the series of attacks had not ended, and some had a very negative effect on the autonomists as far as public opinion was concerned. One such action was a firebombing claimed by the "Anti-Germany League -Autonome Violence". The targets of Anti-Germany League attacks made no political sense and seemed to be chosen almost at random. For example, on December 25, 1991 an office belonging to a local gardening club was burned down, causing 300,000 marks in damage. The communique for this attack said: "Down with the German government - Away with Germany -Germany for the foreigners!" A few days later, an arson attack on a disco caused 200,000 marks in damage. A few months later, police caught a psychiatric patient, the person responsible for the Anti-Germany League attacks, red handed.



A Crystallization Point

The Silvester demonstration took place in a very tense political situation. For this reason, careful planning was required. During the phase of preparations, it was clear that only part of the autonomist scene in Göttingen was taking on the necessary responsibilities. The date for the march was seen as provocative and it seemed like the demo itself could never be pushed through. Many thought it would be impossible to assemble on the Marktplatz at midnight on New Year's Eve. And the call for a masked and ready black bloc was almost like an invitation for the police to smash the demo.

The Silvester demo became a political crystallization point. Despite all of the criticisms from some parts of the autonomist scene, the Autonome Antifa (M) stood by their plans to go through with the march. So on New Year's Eve

The Silvester demonstration, 1991/1992. Most of the demonstrators were masked, and many wore helmets.

Police used watercannons to disperse the vigil for Conny Wessmann on the Weender Landstraße, November 17, 1991. 1991/1992, the demo was not a coalition demo, nor was it even a demonstration by the "autonomist scene". In fact, only the Antifa Youth Front group joined the Autonome Antifa (M) in their call for the demo.

The Future Belongs To Us!

In August 1991, Autonome Antifa (M) published a paper on autonomist organizing. The paper took a critical look at past autonomist politics and concluded that they had failed in most areas due to the lack of a functioning organizational model. This paper on organizing was distributed nationwide and contacts with other groups with a similar analysis were sought.

By the end of 1991, the debates about the question of organizing had become the dominant theme in the autonomist scene. Groups who wanted to pursue a process of organization were already holding meetings. The slogan "The Future Belongs To Us!" was a reference to the debates about the organization process.

The Character Of Photography

Photography captured several of the most important aspects of the mobilization for the Silvester demo. On the poster for the demonstration, the image of a black bloc characterized the determination of the demo, without showing any clashes with police or fascists.

The effect of showing the black bloc in bright colors together with the word "Demo" made it possible to reduce the text on the poster to a minimum.

The Colors

Adding colors to black and white photos is a technique which KuK had used for years. This use



of colors on the "All Will Fall!" posters (see pages 180 and 181 of the German edition), for example, had the effect of highlighting certain visual elements of the picture. The colors are a means of creating artistic expression.

This technique of adding colors is one characteristic of KuK's works. Often times several primary colors are used, because the effect of full tones in the printing process is not the same. Digital technology made this picture colorization process less troublesome, because the final effect could be seen beforehand and adjustments could be made accordingly. This, together with experience in offset printing, allowed for new possibilities for artistic work.

The Results Of The Organization Debate

The concept of the demonstration was achieved. Around 800 people participated in the Silvester demo, nearly all from autonomist groups, and a large number had come from other parts of Germany as well. This demonstration showed the first results of the raging debates on the question of organizing.

(computer montage; 1,500 copies; Silvester 1991/1992; see pages 117 and 199 of the German edition)



The concept of the Silvester demo takes hold. During the entire march, police did not appear. The slogan says:

"Together, the future belong to us!"
Photo:
Rainer Recke

"Go Against The Fascist Centers!"

On March 20, 1993, Autonome Antifa (M) initiated a demonstration against the schooling center of NPD functionary Hans-Michael Fiedler at Schulstraße 3 in Adelebsen.

Fiedler has been a member of the NPD since 1964, and is responsible for propaganda and schooling work within the party. Since 1975, Fiedler has been the editor of 'Nation Europa', a publication whose ideology seeks to build bridges between the conservative right and neo-fascist groups. He has also organized "anti-antifa" work, namely research on political opponents, including the compilation of names, addresses, and photographs. Fiedler has made a name for himself by filing lawsuits against individuals and antifascist organizations. Since 1976, Germany's intelligence agency has referred to him as "a central figure in West German neo-Nazism".

The Political Situation, 1992/1993

In the second half of 1992, the wave of fascist attacks on refugees in Germany reached unprecedented levels. Rostock, Hoyerswerda, and later Molln became city names synonymous with such attacks. The heaviest clashes occurred in Rostock-Lichtenhagen in August 1992. For a period of several days, a refugee hostel was besieged by an increasing crowd of people, eventually numbering almost 2,000. The racist attacks climaxed when people stormed into the hostel and set it on fire. These excesses were made possible due to the non-reaction by the police. Saxony's interior minister, Stock, was forced to resign.

High ranking politicians publicly expressed their understanding for reasons behind the racist attacks, and they utilized this situation to tighten Germany's asylum laws. On May 26, 1993, the German parliament changed Article 16 of the Constitution, the section which deals with foreigners' laws and the right to seek asylum. This change greatly restricted the right the right to seek asylum in Germany.

Candle Light Vigils

As the xenophobic atmosphere in 1992 began to take on the characteristics of a pogrom, the established powers felt compelled to do something. Germany's public image abroad was being damaged. In order to do something about this, a "candle light vigil movement" was called into being. The idea was to present an anti-racist image for Germany to the outside world. Thousands of people took up the government's calls and lit candles in opposition to "racial hatred

and violence". These masses of people sought to make an honest expression against racist attacks.

Thoughts About The Demonstration

It was against this background that Autonome Antifa (M) planned a coalition demonstration which was to pass directly in front of the house of the far-right extremist Hans-Michael Fiedler. The demonstration was to offer a radical orientation and concrete possibility for action for those people who wanted to do something against racism and neo-fascism but who were not satisfied with candle light vigils. So it was decided to mobilize directly to a fascist center.

An Anti-Fascist Action Coalition

The coalition which mobilized for the demonstration in Adelebsen was an action coalition which formed just for this one demonstration. The basis for the cooperation was



the concept paper prepared by Autonome Antifa (M). The concept offered all groups and organizations the possibility to come up with their own political content for the demonstration. A way needed to be found to accommodate all of the coalition's members. From the beginning, it was made clear that a black bloc would lead the demo. This fact didn't seem to bother most of the groups involved in the coalition. Even the fact that there was no legal permit for the demo didn't keep the Greens, individual trade unions, and even the local SPD from taking part, although the latter didn't attend the coalition meetings.

The mobilization placed a great importance on being accepted by the local population. So a public event was organized in a local pub which 160 residents attended. Various people, including a representative of Autonome Antifa (M), spoke at the event and answered questions.

Going against the fascist centers, March 20, 1993. This concept was successful and was the foundation of future coalition work.



The black bloc at the head of the demo in Adelebsen, March 20, 1993.

V.i.S.d.P.: Heinz Kiwitz was an anti-fascist artist from Germany. He fought in the international brigades against Franco's fascist military dictatorship in Spain. Kiwitz fell on the front lines in 1938.

Some pushing and shoving with police lines at the Schulstraße.

More Than 800 In The Black Bloc

The demo formed as planned, and more than 800 people joined in the black bloc at the front. Of the more than 2,000 people who marched, well over half were from the autonomist scene. It became clear a few days before March 20 that the police would not allow the demo to pass directly in front of Fiedler's house. The concept paper stated that, in this event, speeches would be given in front of the police lines. The autonomists had no interest in clashing with the cops at this demo. A representative of Autonome Antifa (M) made this point clear at the start of the demo. The first speeches were given at the memorial marking the location of the former Jewish synagogue. During the speech by Autonome Antifa (M), a wreath in honor of the victims of fascist terror was placed at the monument and a minute of silence was held. With shouts of slogans, the demo then proceeded through Adelebsen until it was blocked by lines of riot police guarding the entrance to the street leading to Fiedler's house. A few projectiles flew into the lines of police. The cops did not react. After a bit of pushing and shoving, the demo moved on. More and more riot police took up positions in the side streets. Shouts of slogans, firecrackers, and signal flares fired towards the lines of police were expressions of anger about the protection being given to Fiedler by the police.

Investigations

A few days after the demonstration, which all coalition members agreed had gone quite well, it became known that state prosecutors in Göttingen had launched an investigation into the local Green party. The authorities were trying to make the Greens into the official organizers of the demonstration and charge them with "unlawful assembly". No charges against the Greens were

ever filed, however. But state officials in Celle decided to pursue the investigations further. In charges alleging that the Autonome Antifa (M) was a "criminal organization", mention was made of the anti-fascist action in Adelebsen. Authorities were trying to claim that the demo had resulted in a public disturbance, destruction of property, and assaults. Other charges included a violation on the ban on wearing masks and uniforms, threatening to riot, and threats on an individual by a group.

The Adelebsen Egg

The picture being painted by the authorities in Celle had nothing at all to do with reality. A look at the investigators' files revealed that. Police had extensive photo documentation and witness testimony. Among these was a picture of an egg hitting a policeman's arm. The egg's shell broke, and the uniform got dirty. In the eyes of the state, that constituted destruction of property. The egg yolk dripped down the officer's uniform and into his glove. That gave the cop an "unpleasant feeling", or to use the state's terminology, it was a case of assault, which in the context of a demonstration is also creating a public disturbance.

The Political Results

The goal of marching directly in front of Hans-Michael Fiedler's house could not be achieved. But that did not lessen the political significance of the demonstration.

The concept prepared by Autonome Antifa (M) was utilized by all the participating groups. Agreements were adhered to, and a broad manifestation of different political forces demonstrated against neo-fascism. The fact that the black bloc was successful was a sign of the importance of autonomist positions within the coalition concept. The police were forced to protect the home of the



NPD functionary, and the state prosecutor came out in public opposition to the anti-fascist action. The fact that subsequent investigations centered not only on the Autonome Antifa (M) but also on the Greens made many people very upset.

Nationwide Effects

Autonome Antifa (M) is a member of the Anti-Fascist Action/Nationwide Organization (AA/BO). The results of the Adelebsen demo were examined by this organization and applied to other projects. Other demonstrations were organized under the motto "Go Against The Fascist Centers!", for example in Mainz-Gonsenheim and Detmold-Pivitsheide. These demonstrations oriented their concepts to the anti-fascist action in Adelebsen.

The Poster Design

The coalition for the Adelebsen demo did not produce a poster, but did participate in the design of KuK's poster. The focus of the design is on the flag of Anti-Fascist Action. The demo is shown as a group of black-clad, masked autonomists as well as unmasked demonstrators.

The variety of people shown is a reflection of the coalition character of the demonstration on March 20, 1993.

The photos used in the poster were from the May 7, 1988 demo against the FAP center in Mackenrode.

Experiences with coalition work in 1987/ 1988, in particular the demonstration against the FAP center, played a major role in the preparations for the demonstration in Adelebsen.

The house shown on the poster is that of Hans-Michael Fiedler in Adelebsen. But a mirror image of the house is shown. This change was necessary to keep the movement on the poster from left to right.

The symbols and the NPD banner shown on the house were added to the poster, since they aren't on the actual house. The poster is also marked by its bright color scheme. The dark blue sky gives the scene a very positive character, without losing any of the fighting spirit of the imagery. (2,000 copies; March 1993; V.i.S.d.P.: H. Kiwitz; see pages 117 and 213 of the German edition)



After a speech by Autonome Antifa (M), a wreath was placed at the former Jewish synagogue in memory of the victims of fascist terror. This was followed by a minute of silence.

"Fight The Class Justice System! The Future Belongs To Us!"

The attempted criminalization of the poster "Fight The Class Justice System!" marked the heaviest attack against KuK up to that time. Federal authorities in Karlsruhe told state officials in Lower Saxony to pursue an investigation under Paragraph 129a, "support for a terrorist organization". This charge was connected to the Paragraph 129 investigations which had been opened against Autonome Antifa (M) in Göttingen in 1991. At first, authorities were trying to prove charges that the group was seeking to form a terrorist association. To do this, a special investigating commission, SOKO 606, was given great leeway to violate the personal rights of several individuals. During the early phases of this investigation, it became clear that the charges of Autonome Antifa (M) being a terrorist association would not stand up. So the authorities changed their approach and attempted to prove that the group was involved in providing support for the RAF. Supposed evidence of this was the exchange of letters from Autonome Antifa (M) members and RAF prisoners, and visits to the prisoners, as well as the public solidarity event and poster which were organized by the group.

"Duvenhorst [head of the state security division] has no doubts that the Autonome Antifa (M) is very close to the RAF. He makes reference to a poster which

was posted up on thousands of walls last year. On the right side of the poster is a picture of the prison in Weiterstadt which was destroyed by a RAF commando – on the left side is a picture of a marching black bloc. Beneath this is the slogan: 'The Future Belongs To Us'." (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, August 9, 1994)

The Construct Begins With An Allegation

The attempts by the intelligence agency, federal police, and state authorities in Lower Saxony to prove a connection between the Autonome Antifa (M) and the RAF were accompanied by a media smear campaign. Whether in press conferences or reports from the state intelligence agency, it was always stated that the group was linked to "terrorism".

To do something about this, one member of Autonome Antifa (M) filed a lawsuit for libel against Lower Saxony's interior minister and various VS intelligence agents in July 1994. The suit was a five page text and was accompanied by various newspaper clippings.

Of course there was no chance this legal challenge would succeed. But it was a political step to go on the offensive against constructs by the repression apparatus, and it primarily had the function of propaganda.

At the end of October 1994, the State Supreme Court in Celle rejected the petition.

Katharina Hammerschmidt.a RAF member from the "first generation", died of cancer on June 29, 1975 in a women's prison in Berlin. The Berlin city government later paid her relatives 5,000 marks in compensation for "neglect of duty".

A Public Event With Former RAF Prisoners

On May 6, 1993, Autonome Antifa (M) organized a public discussion with two former RAF prisoners, Gisela Dutzi and Günter Sonnenberg, and the editor of the magazine 'clockwork 129a', Mathias Meyers.

The room at Göttingen's 'Ballhaus' was filled with over 300 people for the event. Discussions touched on the political situation in the 1970s and 1980s and the conditions and forms of the anti-imperialist resistance, as well as state repression and the struggle against it.

Contrary to what some people had expected, the public event did not face any criminalization. In fact, two people caught by police putting up posters for the event were released without charges.

Raids

The poster for this public event, however, played an important role in the raids on July 5-6, 1994 against 17 alleged members of Autonome Antifa (M). According to prosecutors in Celle, the poster represented a violation under Paragraph 129a, supporting a terrorist organization, in this case the RAF. Seven alleged members of Autonome Antifa (M) were said to have either hung up or sold copies of this poster. The Autonome Antifa (M) were also considered to be the designers of the poster.

Demonstration against the criminalization of the anti-fascist resistance, "Fight class justice", March 11, 1995.

The State Supreme Court In Celle's Description Of The Poster

In a surprise decision handed down on June 19, 1995, the State Supreme Court in Celle threw out the main charges against Autonome Antifa (M) under Paragraphs 129 and 129a. In this ruling, the court gave a detailed description of the poster:



"The overall design of the so-called Weiterstadt poster does not fulfill the requirements for prosecution under Paragraph 129a of the Criminal Code, banned propaganda on behalf of a terrorist association, the Red Army Fraction/RAF. The form and content of the poster lack the necessary requirements to be considered a form of support on behalf of the terrorist association RAF.

"The 'message' of the poster, contrary to that offered by the prosecution, is not a statement in support of the 'RAF' bomb attack on March 27, 1993, nor does the poster say that the 'RAF' should strengthen its organizational capacities in the future. Rather the 'message' of the poster is that the system of 'class justice' must be struggled against and defeated by a broad 'anti-fascist' action coalition ('The Future Belongs To Us!'). ...

The visual impact of the poster shows a marching and threatening 'black bloc' and the 'symbol' of the Göttingen group 'Autonome Antifa (M)' in the foreground. The image of the prison in Weiterstadt is optically placed in the background. The visual focus is placed on the 'black bloc' - placed prominently in the middle of the poster - and the color and contrast highlight the banner, with the central slogans 'Fight The Class Justice System!' and 'No Criminalization Of The Revolutionary Resistance!', which represent the central 'message' of the poster. The poster is not advertising on behalf of the 'RAF', rather for the goals and actions of the group 'Anti-Fascist Action', to which Göttingen's 'Autonome Antifa (M)' belongs, supported by, among other things, a 'black bloc', and the poster is advertising on behalf of the 'Autonome Antifa (M)' itself. The poster does not feature any 'RAF' symbols...whereas the 'Anti-Fascist Action' symbol appears several times; ...the objective is to make propaganda for their own group, so it cannot be determined that the message of the poster is to advertize on behalf of the 'RAF'.

"The use of the image of the destroyed Weiterstadt prison can be viewed as an artistic and symbolic (and agitational, representing an actual event) representation of the demand for freedom for 'leftist' prisoners, as is the fist which rises into the upper left corner of the poster.

"Even the demand written along the bottom edge of the poster, 'Freedom For All Prisoners From The RAF, Resistance, And Antifa!', was not undertaken on behalf of the RAF, nor are the makers of the poster promoting any means of achieving this. This general demand is repeated all the time by groups of the radical left and does not — unlike, for example, the demand for regroupment made during the hungerstrike in March 1981 (cf. the federal court's ruling on this) — imply a connection to the organization of the 'RAF'. ...

"For the reasons stated above, it cannot be concluded that the poster constitutes propaganda on behalf of the terrorist association 'RAF'. The raised fist and the slogan 'The Future Belongs To Us!' do not represent more or less hidden association with the 'RAF' or some sort of joining of forces with the 'RAF', rather they represent a more general joining of forces, if not of the entire, splintered 'left', at least of the 'Anti-Fascist Action' and the autonomist movement. ...

"Furthermore, the 'Autonome Antifa (M)' has organized demonstrations on several occasions under the slogan 'The Future Belongs To Us!', a fact which also speaks against an interpretation of a supposed connection with the 'RAF'. ... This slogan, which represents a political program, was consciously selected after breaking with the earlier slogan 'Trust Our Own Forces!' (cf. 'Interview with Autonome Antifa (M)' in the scene publication 'radikal', Nr.147) and represents a break with past political positions...and has nothing to do with the attack on Weiterstadt by the 'RAF' or any sort of association with them...'

State prosecutors in Celle immediately appealed this court decision in federal court in Karlsruhe. On August 4, 1995, the federal court ruled that a trial should be opened in the state court in Lüneburg against the 17 defendants on

charges of forming a criminal association. The charges under Paragraph 129a were dropped, however.

(film montage; 1,500 copies; May 1993; V.i.S.d.P.: Katharina Hammerschmidt; see pages 117 and 217 of the German edition)

During a demonstration on March 11, 1995, the posters "The **Future Belongs** To Us!", criminalized under Paragraph 129a, were hung up.

"Fight The FAP -Resist Organized Neo-Fascism!"

The highpoint of the coalition politics of Autonome Antifa (M) was undoubtedly the demonstration against the FAP and its regional leader, Thorsten Heise, on June 4, 1994 in Northeim.

The concept was directly related to the one used for the coalition demonstration of March 20, 1993 in Adelebsen. Unlike with that demonstration, however, there were very few approachable structures for anti-fascist work in Northeim, and it was difficult to judge how the police and local authorities would react. It was no coincidence that Heise chose to live in Northeim. There, he could remain relatively unbothered by anti-fascist actions.

A Neo-Nazi Known Across The Country

Born in 1969, Thorsten Heise became a FAP activist in 1988. He was thoroughly schooled by his political mentor, Karl Polacek. By means of various actions, demonstrations, fights, and organizing some concerts, Heise became an important figure by 1990. He became one of the most well known neo-Nazis in the country after he organized a neo-fascist Rudolph Hess memorial march in August 1993 in the town of Fulda.

Planning The Demonstration In Fulda

The initiative for the demonstration in Northeim came from the Autonome Antifa (M). By means of coalition partners, especially the Greens, local groups in the area were contacted. Despite all the difficulties, a public event was organized in Northeim before the demonstration. A few citizens attended the event. Only very late did the media begin a public discussion of the issue. Individuals and groups began to express their trust in the Autonome Antifa (M). The ball starting rolling. Eventually more groups took up the call for the demonstration, and the day before even the DGB trade union association for Göttingen-Northeim and the AStA of Göttingen University added their support as well. So the action actually represented a broader social spectrum than the demonstration in Adelebsen. There was also a nationwide mobilization to Northeim. All member groups in the AA/BO participated. Public events to mobilize for the action were held in some cities as well.

A Success Beforehand

Two days before the demonstration, Thorsten Heise was arrested. The official reason was his participation in an attack on a student party in February 1994, but he was not taken into custody



The AA/BO bloc during the demonstration against the FAP center in Northeim, June 4, 1994. Photo: Rainer Recke at that time. Public discussion and the resulting political pressure in the runup to the demonstration against the FAP forced the authorities to act. Heise was placed in pre-trial detention, but was released again on July 1, 1994. It wasn't until May 1995 that Thorsten Heise was convicted of assault and sentenced to eight months in prison. Another previously suspended sentence was now converted to jail time as well, meaning a total of 22 months in prison.

Helene Overlach
was the deputy
chair of the Red
Women's and
Girls' Union
(RFMB). She was
shot at during a
demonstration
in 1931, and she
later emigrated
to the Soviet

The Demonstration In Northeim

On June 4, 1994, around 3,000 people demonstrated under the motto "Fight The FAP! Resist Organized Neo-Fascism!" in Northeim. This was the largest demonstration against the FAP since the 1980s. The demo was led by a black bloc, which comprised about two thirds of the demonstration. The high degree of success was made possible by the nationwide mobilization and the cooperation of different forces, from the autonomists to citizens' initiatives.

Authorities accepted the preconditions of the coalition, namely that the police would not search people, there would not be a line of riot police marching alongside, there would not be a police documentation and video van, the black bloc would be tolerated, and police would simply perform traffic control duties. The political concept was pushed through, and the police state kept its distance.

As in Adelebsen, police made it known beforehand that the anti-fascist demo could not pass directly in front of the neo-Nazi's house. During the demonstration, around 200 fascists from all across Germany gathered inside Heise's house.

No Pointless Confrontation

The demonstration first proceeded into downtown Northeim. After a few speeches, the demo moved in the direction of Heise's house. Police had blocked the street about one kilometer away, in view of Heise's house. There were rows of barriers and about 1,000 riot police. During a speech in front of police lines, a FAP flag was torched. Then the first few rows of the black bloc attempted to pull down the police barriers. But there was no plan to attack the police, as had been agreed to during coalition meetings. There were some minor clashes, however, as police began swinging their clubs. Because it wasn't possible to proceed, and any further action would only result in a pointless escalation, the demonstration turned around and went back into town.

A Political Goal Achieved

The goal of the demonstration was to organize a broad anti-fascist manifestation against neofascism, and this goal was achieved. The coalition work had become better and a step



Riot police during the demo against the FAP in Northeim.

Furthermore, autonomist anti-fascism had become a political factor in the southern Lower Saxony region. This successful concept is what dogged the state prosecutor's attempts at criminal investigations over the years. The open cooperation between radical forces and established parties and organizations was a thorn in the eyes of the police and prosecutors, who wanted to criminalize these politics and destroy Autonome Antifa (M). Warrants for house searches had already been approved by the time of the Northeim demo, but the authorities decided to wait.

They were hoping for a confrontation which would destroy the coalition work and make it easier to criminalize the group. But that didn't happen.

One month later, the repression apparatus went into action, but the coalition partners expressed their solidarity with those affected and the Autonome Antifa (M) were not isolated.



Ridiculous Neo-Nazis

The poster for the Northeim demo featured a group of neo-Nazis fleeing from a series of projectiles. The three figures represent different aspects of the neo-fascist spectrum: party activists, skinheads, and women. The house the fascists are seen fleeing towards is Thorsten Heise's place in Northeim.

(computer montage; 2,000 copies; May 1994; V.i.S.d.P.: Helene Overlach; see pages 117 and 214 of the German edition)

Thorsten Heise, in a 'Panorama' TV documentary in 1992, described the "military exactness" of a commando attack against him.

"Stop State Terrorism -Fight Back!"

There was a period of just ten days between the police raids of July 5-6, 1994 and the nationwide demonstration in Göttingen called for July 16, 1994 in response to this state attack. Within this short time span, during which there were also two regional demonstrations and a public information event organized against the criminalization of the Autonome Antifa (M), a nationwide mobilization needed to be organized. The slogan "Stop State Terrorism - Fight Back! Stop The Paragraph 129/129a Trial Against Autonome Antifa (M)" was chosen for the demo. This motto arose shortly after the raids and appeared on several banners and flyers. The poster for the nationwide demo needed to be designed quickly, and it required a clear and impressive form.

The Photography

The motif pictured a photo of the end of the nationwide demonstration in Göttingen on



November 25, 1989 following the death of Conny Wessmann. As this demo was dispersing in front of the JuZI youth center, riot police suddenly appeared and provoked the crowd. Following this police attack, stones and molotovs flew from the crowd into police lines. Police spokesmen later tried to claim that the police action had been an error, that the cops had gone down the wrong street by mistake.

Overall Design

In line with the phrase "Fight Back!", the picture shows an image of autonomists clashing with riot police, but that incident was not an attack, rather an act of defence. The aim is to show the period from the antifa demo in 1989 to the antirepression demonstration in 1994 was marked by politically motivated attacks on the part of police and authorities against the anti-fascist resistance.

The Solidarity Demonstration

Following the raids on July 5-6, 1994, there was a wave of solidarity, despite the fact that a local coalition no longer existed. The call for solidarity was seen as self-evident. It went without saying that a black bloc would lead the demonstration. The technical details would be organized by the Autonome Antifa (M), and would be supported by all autonomist circles.

The demonstration was to proceed peacefully, and a call went out for the police to keep their distance. More than 3,500 people assembled for the demo and marched through downtown

Police take cover in front of the courthouse.

More than 3,500 people took part in the demonstration on July 16,1994.



V.i.S.d.P.: Ernst Schneller, born on November 8, 1890, was a soldier in the First World War in 1914. In 1920, he defected from the SPD to the KPD, and in 1924 he joined the RFB. A member of parliament for the KPD, he was arrested by the Nazis in 1933 and murdered by the SS on October 11, 1944 in Sachsenhausen.

Göttingen, with no cops in sight. It wasn't until the demo reached the court building that a large number of riot police were present. The demonstration reacted to this with a volley of firecrackers, bottles, and rocks. According to police, eight officers were injured.

Except for the local SPD, no groups distanced themselves from this expression of militancy. There was a clear and understandable political background to the attacks in front of the court, and these events had no negative effects on subsequent solidarity work. Various groups, even mainstream ones, stood together for over two years against SCHLAGA ZURÜCK! this attempt at state criminalization. On Sep-

ges were dropped, a victory which resulted from broad solidarity.

A Secret Publisher

tember 16, 1996, the char-

The investigations against Autonome Antifa (M) continued after the raids in July 1994. The poster "Stop State Terrorism - Fight Back!" was one excuse for this. The list of charges against the 17 alleged group members included inciting criminal activity.

"The posters utilizes a photo, 'Göttingen, Lotzestraße, November 25, 1989: Autonomists show the cops the right way to the Wiesenstraße'. ... These police officers were pelted with stones, sling shots, molotov cocktails, and other objects, and 97 of them were injured.

> The poster, by bringing that date to mind and using that picture, in

> > conjunction with the slogan 'Fight Back!', leaves no doubt that a 'militant' demonstration was planned, and that implies riot, assault, and the destruction of property."

(pages 142 and 143 of the charges filed by the State Prosecutor's Office in Celle; February 13, 1995)

The space where the name and address of the poster's publisher is legally supposed to appear was crossed out with a black marker.

State police went through a great deal of technical fuss to remove the marker and make the address legible once again. To their great disappointment, there was none.

(film montage; 2,000 copies; July 1994; V.i.S.d.P.: Ernst Schneller; see pages 117 and 215 of the German edition)



T DEN STAATSTERRORIS

Anti-criminalization demonstration on July 16, 1994. Photo: Marcus Höhn

"Nothing And No One Is Forgotten!"

On November 19, 1994, Autonome Antifa (M) organized a demonstration to mark the fifth anniversary of the death of Conny Wessmann. The political content of this demo was not just to remember the death of an anti-fascist, but to remember all those who had died in the struggle against fascism or who had lost their lives as victims of fascist or state terror. The theme was the history of the resistance and the ruling powers. Despite changes and some historic breaks, the fundamental structures of the capitalist system have remained the same over time, and resistance to capitalism has been repressed and beaten down in all phases of history this century.

The demonstration drew upon political examples which related to themes taken up by the Autonome Antifa (M) and the AA/BO. These included the November Revolution and the councilist movement from 1918 to 1921, the systematic destruction of all opposition during the Nazi period, the repression against communists in the 1950s, and the present day criminalization of the anti-fascist resistance. In general, this action was designed to increase awareness about the history of the resistance. The slogan "Nothing And No One Is Forgotten!" is a fighting message against the ruling system's historical revisionism, which would like to erase the resistance and forget the death of anti-fascist Conny Wessmann, among many other things. The system wants to erase the traces of everyone and everything which reminds people of the resistance. The demonstration was also designed to be a political counterweight to the 'November 9-30 Forum', an event dominated by the social democrats. Attempts to find support at this forum for the demonstration were unsuccessful, as was the suggestion to make this demonstration a part of the forum's activities. The mainstream groups participating in the forum had no interest in remembering the revolutionary resistance. Also, the organizational debates within the autonomist scene, which had started in 1988 around the issue of coalition politics and which continually resulted in critiques of the Autonome Antifa (M), reached their final highpoint during preparations for the demo on November 19, 1994.

This action was a continuation of the politics of the Autonome Antifa (M), which would not allow itself to be limited by the state's attempts at criminalization. The spectrum of groups which took up the call for the demo was not big, however. With the exception of a few socialist groups in Göttingen, support came only from the autonomist scene.



Never Forget!

The motto "Nothing And No One Is Forgotten! -Criminalization Of The Anti-Fascist Resistance!" was used for the November 19, 1994 demonstration, and more than 1,000 anti-fascists

As with the previous demonstration organized by the Autonome Antifa (M), the AA/BO was also involved in mobilization and planning. Local AA/BO groups organized participation in their cities, sometimes by means of public events. During the demo itself, the AA/BO took on practical roles such as marshalling and protecting the loudspeaker car. In line with demonstration's motto, marchers carried signs with the names of revolutionaries and anti-fascists killed and murdered from 1918 to the present.

There were three stops along the route for speeches. In front of a refugee hostel, a speech was given about the situation of refugees. In the Neustadt district of Göttingen, a speech was given and a memorial was unveiled in honor of Ernst Fischer, a communist and anti-fascist who was killed in the concentration camp in Berlin-Plotzensee. A huge banner was hung up at the site where Conny was killed. This featured an image of the Buchenwald memorial and was in memory of those killed in political murders from 1918 to the present.

Police Conduct

Before the beginning of the demonstration, police set up checkpoints on all major streets in the city. Many demonstrators had their ID cards checked, and it took a long time for people to reach the downtown area. Police used several video cameras to extensively document the demonstration.

There had not been such police conduct in Göttingen since the Conny demo in November 1990. But that wasn't all: state prosecutor Endler from Celle appeared in person on the Marktplatz,

Signs with the names of people killed in the struggle against fascism and imperialism were carried during the demonstration on November 19, 1994. Photo: Marcus Höhn



V.i.S.d.P.: Walter Krämer, state legislator for the KPD in Hannover. Walter Krämer was arrested in 1933. On November 6, 1941, he was shot by the SS in a concentration camp in Goslar.



Banner hung on November 19, 1994 on the bridge near the spot where Conny was killed. Photo: Marcus Höhn

which was a clear provocation since he was mainly responsible for the raids and investigations against Autonome Antifa (M). The state prosecutor was chased out of the square.

A large number of riot police were in position in front of the court building, clubs drawn and ready to attack. The demonstration was forced to proceed with three lines of riot police on each side.

The Poster Motif

The main motif for the poster was the memorial at the former concentration camp in Buchenwald. The resistance against the SS organized by communists inside Buchenwald has been a controversial historical topic.

East Germany had erected a national monument in memory of this resistance, but in West Germany the history of the resistance in Buchenwald was either forgotten or defamed. The demonstration in Göttingen was against a similar defamation and erasing of the anti-fascist resistance.

No historical parallels were drawn between the Buchenwald resistance and the present day antifascist struggle, but the point was made that there is a long history of anti-fascist resistance in Germany, which at its core is directed against the capitalist system, and which the historical revisionism in West Germany is seeking to eliminate from memory.

(film montage; 1,500 copies; October 1994; V.i.S.d.P.: Walter Krämer; see pages 117 and 218 of the German edition)

Historical Work On The Revolutionary Resistance

The history of anti-fascist resistance has always been a central focus of the works by KuK. Because this part of Germany's history is always being pushed out of memory, actions were continually organized to keep alive the content and events of the resistance. For example, "Rock Against The Right" in Northeim in June 1992 had an historical element to it. In addition to an exhibition and two KuK posters, which were to mobilize for the concert and demonstration in Northeim, an oil painting was created as well.

Historical Confrontation In Northeim

On June 27, 1922, anti-fascists organized a demonstration in the regional city of Northeim near Göttingen. This was to protest the death of foreign minister Walter Rathenau, who was of Jewish faith, murdered by the secret fascist group 'Organisation Consul'.

The anti-fascists chose Northeim as the site of their demonstration because at the same a propaganda theater performance was being held by the fascist organization Young German Order. The anti-fascist manifestation was an attempt to hinder this event. Around 1,000 people gathered on the Marktplatz in Northeim for the demonstration. A red flag waved at the front of the crowd. But by the time anti-fascist procession got underway, the fascist performance had ended.

When demonstrators came across the young fascists, a heavy clash erupted. Police were unable to intervene.

Under pressure from anti-fascists, police were forced to lead the leader of the fascists through the city in chains. Anti-fascists smashed the windows of the local offices of the Young German Order, the 'Hotel zur Sonne', and burned the red-white-andblack flag of the Empire to show their rejection of

Seventy Years Later

On June 27, 1992, Autonome Antifa Northeim, together with Autonome Antifa (M), organized a demonstration under the motto "Resistance Has Tradition - Organize The Anti-Fascist Resistance!" together with a "Rock Against The Right" concert.

The demo by about 800 people followed the same route as the anti-fascist march seventy years before. Afterwards, a rally was held outside the 'Hotel zur Sonne' and a window display with a reproduction of an oil painting was displayed. A few days later, fascists destroyed this window display.

Two Events In One Painting

Work on the oil painting did not include an authentic representation of the events in Northeim on June 27, 1922. Instead, a motif was chosen which described this regional action with a more general presentation of a militant clash between



Nazis and anti-fascists during the Weimar Republic. The painting also drew on another historical event in southern Lower Saxony, namely the April 1932 riots between Nazis and antifascists in Bad Lauterberg in the Harz region.

Proletarian Realism

In order to create a picture showing militant antifascist resistance during the Weimar Republic, the choice of painting is significant. This style is reminiscent of the proletarian realism of the 1920s and 1930s. The idea was to give the impression of a historical work. The painting itself shows a confrontation between the Red Front Fighting Union (RFB) and the Red Women's and Girls' Union (RFMB) against the Nazi party (NSDAP).

The RFB was founded in 1924 as a proletarian militia with an anti-imperialist focus. The organization was close to the KPD, appeared in uniforms, and was militarily organized. Following the days of riots in Berlin after May 1, 1929, the so-called "Bloody May", the RFB was banned, but continued to function clandestinely until 1933.

The RFMB was founded as an independent organization in 1925, but saw itself as politically connected to the RFB. The women of the RFMB wore uniforms as well.

The NSDAP had various sub-organizations. In 1921, the SA was formed, and the SS was formed as an elite formation within the SA in 1925. The SA and SS were brutal gangs, and were representative of the terror of national-socialism.

An Image In The Style Of That Period

The painting, much like the artistic images of that time period, does not have any "shining victors". Although the painting makes it clear that the Nazis are losing, all the figures are the same size and there is no recognizable leader. The use of the Reich flag not only has historical connotations for the Northeim region, the flag is still used by neo-Nazis in Germany today. A special importance was placed on showing women in the resistance in the painting.

Other Campaigns With Historical Themes

In November 1993, the member groups of the AA/BO organized a series of actions in various cities around the 75th anniversary of the November Revolution in 1918 in Germany. A brochure entitled "History Is Made! - November 9, 1918/1993" was published as well. Under the same motto and motif, an anti-fascist week was organized in Göttingen from October 24-November 14. Part of this week consisted of an exhibition about the history of the resistance in the region, various public events, and a demonstration on the evening of November 9. A KuK poster was created for the events in Göttingen (see page 223 of the German edition). On the 50th anniversary of the liberation from Nazi fascism in 1995, the AA/BO again organized a nationwide initiative around this historic date. A joint brochure and poster entitled "May 8th - 50th Anniversary Of The Liberation From Nazi Fascism" were produced (see page 227 of the German edition). A separate KuK poster was created for the series of public events in the Harz and Göttingen regions (see page 226 of the German edition).

Bad Lauterberg,

A Former Red Stronghold In The Harz Region

In regions where the anti-fascist resistance movement used to be strong, the history of these political struggles is very rich. That is especially true in Bad Lauterberg and the Harz region. Bad Lauterberg was one of the few areas in Germany where a strike movement arose briefly in 1933. The aim of this general strike was to protest the seizure of power by the fascists. Karl Peix, a KPD member of the Prussian assembly in Hannover and one of the most famous anti-fascists from the Harz region, was from the city of Bad Lauterberg. After engaging in illegal organizing, Karl Peix was arrested by the Nazis in October 1933 and sent to

Poster for the demonstration on June 27, 1992 in Northeim.



V.i.S.d.P.: Karl
Peix, born in
1899 in
Herzberg/Harz.
Murdered by
the SS on
November 6,
1941 in a concentration camp in
Goslar.

Exhibition on April 8, 1995 for the 50th anniversary of the liberation from Nazi fascism. The exhibition was shown in several tents outside of Göttingen's city hall. Göttingen was liberated by U.S. troops on April 8, 1945.







Receipt for the oil painting confiscated during the police raids on July 5,1994 in Göttingen.

VVN memorial for three antifascist resistance fighters from Bad Lauterberg. the Buchenwald concentration camp. He became active in the anti-fascist resistance there. On November 6, 1941, in a small camp in Goslar just outside of Buchenwald, the SS murdered Karl Peix together with Walter Krämer, another well known anti-fascist from Lower Saxony.

In January 1994, a public event and demonstration were organized under the motto "Resistance Has Tradition – Organize The Anti-Fascist Struggle!" in order to commemorate the resistance in Bad Lauterberg (see page 223 of the German edition). At a rally on the site of the April 1932 riots, a display was set up featuring a reproduction of the oil painting depicting the scene. This action, which involved about 200 people, received a great deal of local attention.

On the 50th anniversary of the day when Karl Peix and Walter Krämer were murdered, an event and rally were organized to an anti-fascist Memorial from the VVN in November 1996 in Bad Lauterberg. A sketch was created to commemorate the murders of these anti-fascists (see page 225 of the German edition).

Confiscated

During the raids against Autonome Antifa (M) in Göttingen in July 1994, the oil painting of the historical riots was confiscated by the police. After "photographic evidence" was taken, the painting was returned.

(oil painting; June 1992; see page 224 of the German edition)









Kur Concert – more than just music and coma \cdot see page 77



Full bottles fly better · see page 77



We chaotic radicals have a long tradition \cdot see page 79



Repression and expulsion are murder! \cdot see page 80



Attack organized neo-fascism – fight the viking youth \cdot see page 81/82



Stop the investigations against autonomist antifascists! \cdot see page 83/84



We attack the fascists – For a self-organized struggle! \cdot see page 84/85

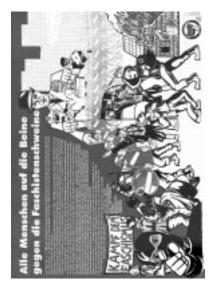


All will fall · see page 86–88



Demonstration for Conny Wessmann \cdot see page 89/90

116



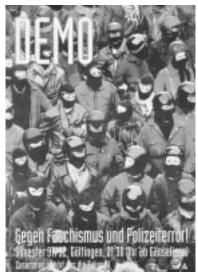
Everyone on your feet against the fascist pigs! \cdot see page 91



Against the mainstream, against nationalism, police state and racism \cdot see page 94–97



Militancy concerts · see page 99



Against facism and police terror – the future belongs to us \cdot see page 100-102



Go against the facist centers! see page 103–105



Fight the class justice system – the future belongs to us \cdot see page 105–107



Fight the FAP – resist organized neo-fascism! \cdot see page 107–109



Stop state terrorism – fight back \cdot see page 109–110



Nothing and no one is forgotten \cdot see page 111/112

Art and Struggle (KuK) was developed in the 1980's as part of the autonomist movement. It is a conceptual idea for a cultural-political initiative. The project KuK is based on the idea to use resistance culture as an instrument in the political struggle. Up to date, there are several hundreds of posters, oil paintings, sketches and street theater plays. Every action by Art and Struggle is accompanied by a political action. As far as concept, realization and in particular continuity are concerned, the initative KuK is an exception within the autonomist movement. No other art initiative in Germany has faced as comparibly severe persecution. On 117 pages with 213 black and white pictures the history and concept of KuK are explained.

Since KuK is comprehensible only in connection with the political movement, the development of the leftist movement in Germany since 1945 is described. The origins as well as the actions of the autonomist movement are focused on. In particular, the nature of autonomist anti-fascism is explained.